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ABSTRACT

This book brings together the essential aspects of good graduate admissions policies, procedures, and practices. It is maintained at the outset that graduate administrators and faculty should take an active approach to admissions, stating their program goals and priorities and the means by which they plan to realize them. The booklet goes on to cover first the organizational structure and management of admissions, looking at both centralized and decentralized models and comparing those models in the process of admissions. Next discussed is the issue of establishing admissions policies including philosophy, goals, and objectives, legal issues, application requirements and selection standards, and optional materials. Subsequent sections discuss admissions categories, readmission policies, transfer policies, advanced admission for undergraduates, and application to more than one degree program. A section on implementing admissions policies covers the admission decision, admissions processing, and the appeal process. The last three sections look at evaluating admissions policies, post-admission decision activity, and financial considerations (application fee, financial aid). Appendixes contain a Council of Graduate Schools resolution, examples from application materials, and a form to expedite admission. Includes a 22-item bibliography. (JB)

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AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

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CGS Task Force
on
Graduate Admissions

Elizabeth U. Baranger, Chair
University of Pittsburgh

Adela A. Allen
University of Arizona

Carol B. Diminnie
CGS Dean in Residence, 1991-92
St. Bonaventure University

Virginia Falkenberg
Eastern Kentucky University

Robert P. Guertin
Tufts University

Jacqueline Looney
CGS Dean in Residence, 1991-92
Duke University

Douglas P. Ormrod
University of Guelph

James M. Siddens
The Ohio State University

Nancy A. Gaffney
CGS Editor

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A POLICY STATEMENT

AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

COUNCIL OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS

CAROL B. DIMINNIE
DEAN IN RESIDENCE

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Washington, D.C. 20036-1173
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Foreword

This booklet brings together the essential aspects of good graduate admissions policies, procedures, and practices. While universities may vary widely in their approaches to this important function, and while no single model can be cited as satisfying all purposes, certain aspects of the graduate admissions process are fundamental and pervasive. Among these are the central role played by faculty, the establishment of multiple criteria for evaluating students who have applied for admission, the development of effective and timely procedures for processing applications and communicating with prospective students, and the design of admission categories that support the objectives of students and the institution to which they have applied.

In addition, as departments seek ways to identify and admit students with high prospects for success, they need to evaluate carefully traditional criteria and explore alternative approaches in order to find students whose interests, abilities, and talents best qualify them for admission to a particular program.

To carry out all of these objectives, faculty members, as well as administrators who are involved in the admission of graduate students, need a comprehensive guide to the graduate admissions process and the issues that relate to it. This booklet is intended to meet that need.

Jules B. LaPidus
President
Council of Graduate Schools
Summer 1992

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1
Definitions 1

Organizational Structure and the Management of Graduate Admissions 2
Centralized versus Decentralized Models 2
Comparison of Models in the Processing of Admissions 3
Establishing Admissions Policies 3
Collecting Applications 3
Evaluating Credentials 4
Selecting Students for Admission. 5
Notifying Applicant and Relevant Offices of Admissions Decision 5
Maintaining Accurate Admissions Records 5
Assessing Admissions Policies 6

Establishing Admissions Policies 6
Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives of the Institution and Department 6
Legal Issues 7
Offers of Admission 8
Affirmative Action Plans. 8
Application Forms. 9
Student Behavior. 9
The Buckley Amendment 10
Fraudulent Application. 10
Application Requirements and Selection Standards 11
Required Application Material 11
The application form 12
Official transcripts 14
Letters of recommendation 16
Proof of English competency 17
Optional Application Materials 19
Standardized test scores 20
Personal statement 23
Writing sample or examples of student's written work 23
Interview 23
Portfolio/audition, work/research experience 24
Admissions Categories 24
Readmission Policies 27
Transfer Policies 28
Advanced Admission for Undergraduates 28
Application to More Than One Degree Program 28

Implementing Admissions Policy 29
The Admissions Decision 29
Admissions Processing 31
Rolling versus Fixed Date Admissions 31
Innovations in Admissions Processing 32
Evaluating an Applicant with an Incomplete Dossier 33
Monitoring Special Interest Applications 34
The Appeal Process 34

Evaluating Admissions Policies 34

Post-Admission Decision Activity 36

Financial Considerations 36
The Application Fee 36
Financial Aid Considerations 37

Conclusion 38

Appendixes 39
Appendix A: Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants 40
Appendix B: Examples from Graduate Program Application Materials 42
Appendix C: Form to Expedite Admission 55

Bibliography 56

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to identify and discuss good pra actices for managing the graduate admissions function. Graduate admission policies and procedures should facilitate the matriculation of applicants who indicate promise of successfully completing their chosen programs. Matching the knowledge, the interests, and the developed skills of the applicant with the requirements and characteristics of the grad uate program will result in higher retention rates, more satisfied graduate faculty and stu dents, and better quality and effectiveness of graduate programs.

It is easy to take a passive role in the admissions arena and a llow the composition of the admitted student group to be determined by accident rather t han by design. Instead, graduate administrators and faculty should take an active approac h to admissions, stating their program goals and priorities and the means by which the y plan to realize them. Graduate admissions policies which result from this proactive d esign will reflect these goals. The requirements for admission must then be articulated clearly to all relevant parties, including the applicants, admission committee members, and graduate admission administrators.

The question of where to begin is not an easy one. It is difficult to separate the recruiting function from that of admissions. The development and distribution of the catalog and promotional materials are usually handled by an admi ssions office. Similarly, the tracking of inquiries is a crucial aspect of recruitment and, han dled properly, leads to a better match of admitted students to programs. Demographic stu dies of the inquiry pool are useful for planning, recruiting and resource allocation. Howe ver, these activities will be considered part of the recruitment function and will not be disc ussed here.

Definitions

Throughout this policy statement, the words "department" and d "program" will be used interchangeably. "University" will be used to refer to any institu tion of higher learning. The title of "graduate dean" will refer to the chief academic offic er for graduate education and "graduate school" will refer to that unit or office responsib le for central university graduate affairs. "Baseline" application materials or "baseline" admission standards will refer to those required for all graduate programs in the institution.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

Centralized versus Decentralized Models

A successful graduate admissions system requires effective admissions policies, procedures to implement these policies, and efficient offices to carry out the admissions processing functions. The administration of this system includes oversight of both technical and policy making functions. The technical aspect includes the collection of application materials, the evaluation of credentials, the entry and maintenance of admissions data, the tracking of the applicant's progress through the system, and the notification of the applicant of the admission decision. In the policy making area, setting and maintaining standards of admission, determining admission processes, and assessing admissions policies are the primary concerns. Universities have devised a variety of ways to manage these graduate admissions functions, ranging from completely centralized to completely decentralized administrative structures. Most systems fall somewhere in between.

Centralization may occur within the graduate school, where only graduate applications are considered, or at the university level, where admissions for both undergraduate and graduate students are processed. In fully centralized graduate school systems, policy governing procedures and baseline standards for all graduate programs are made by the graduate school in conjunction with a university-wide council of faculty. The collection of application material, the evaluation of credentials, a second level review of departmental admission decisions, the notification of applicants of the admission decision, the maintenance of accurate admission records, and the assessment of admission policies are all carried out centrally by the graduate school. A university-wide centralized admissions office, on the other hand, typically collects the application materials, evaluates credentials, maintains admissions records, and notifies the student of the admission decision. This centralized office does not make policy on baseline standards. It may carry out the other functions listed above or it may rely on the departments, schools, or the graduate unit to perform these roles.

In a fully decentralized admissions system, each department, or more usually the school to which it belongs, sets most of the policy governing procedures, establishes standards, and handles the technical aspects of admissions as well. In another model, the application material is collected in the departments, but all other functions are carried out by the graduate school.

Certainly, variations on these models commonly exist. Since proper management of admission activities is critical to high quality graduate education, universities involved in graduate education should carefully consider which admission functions should be

centralized and which departmentalized. Below are descriptions of the various admission functions with some advantages and disadvantages of centralized or decentralized control over each function.

Comparison of Models in the Processing of Admissions

Establishing Admissions Policies. Every institution needs a framework of university-wide policies governing graduate admission. In the centralized graduate school model, these policies are determined by the graduate school in consultation with various faculty councils. In a decentralized department-centered system, these might be determined by the chief academic officer of the school to which the departments belong, again in consultation with faculty councils. The advantage of the centralized graduate school model is that a group of administrators and faculty with experience in graduate education make the policies governing graduate admissions. In consultation with colleagues in the departments, they decide what should be university-wide policy and what policy can be determined by the departments. In the decentralized system, the establishment of necessary university-wide policies may be deferred or, indeed, may not be specified at all, with a resulting decline in the quality of the process.

Collecting Applications. The collection of applications involves monitoring the receipt of required credentials and timely notification to the prospective student of any missing documents. It is recommended that routine notices be sent to the applicant showing the status of the application, especially shortly before any decision deadlines. The applicant should also be informed when the application file is complete. At institutions where the application is deactivated if all credentials are not received within a set time period (typically one year), the student should receive a warning a month or two before the deactivation deadline. Efficiency in responding to any inquiries concerning the application process or the status of applications and in tracking applications can be enhanced by maintaining this data on a computer system.

For this function, the centralized models have some advantages. The clerical and data entry functions can be performed more efficiently and effectively with professional staff members dedicated to and trained for this responsibility. Admission processing is not an ad hoc or additional responsibility as it may be at the department level. Personnel who are involved full-time in the admissions process can provide the desired services both to students applying for admission and to the faculty considering their applications. A central admissions office can also respond to applicants inquiring about admission to multiple programs.

When the centralized office is within the graduate school, more control over the entire admissions process can be achieved. The graduate school often can answer applicants' questions about the institutional requirements and policies and about its array of academic

programs more knowledgeably than can a centralized university-wide office. Further, graduate applications do not compete for attention with other deadlines (freshman, transfer, or professional applications).

Successful matriculation of applicants, particularly for highly qualified students, is dependent on a timely response by the institution as well as by the faculty in the unit to which the individual is applying. Unless care is taken, a centralized admission system can fall behind in processing applications at times of peak activity, leading to frustration on the part of faculty and applicants. The information flow can be hindered by holding documents until a file is completed. This problem may be overcome if the centralized office maintains a prospect file and distributes it at appropriate intervals to the departments, and also allows the departments access to the application materials before the dossier is complete. Some institutions do not delay dossiers if they lack only a transcript which contains under nine hours of transfer credit. Alternatively, to alert the department of the prospective student's interest in the program, a duplicate copy of the application form may be sent to the department as soon as it is received in the admissions office. The graduate dean should set goals for the timely processing of applications and periodically should examine the efficiency of the admissions process.

The greatest advantage of decentralized admissions processing is the sensitivity that can be practiced in dealing directly with the applicants. Inappropriate applications can be returned quickly to the students, saving considerable time and effort in clerical work, and permitting the applicants time to apply elsewhere or seek other career paths. Students who apply directly to the department can be contacted immediately by telephone or letter and, where feasible, invited to visit the department. However, when a decentralized model is used, it is valuable to establish a university-wide view of the admissions process and to require departments to adhere to university standards. This is particularly true in terms of responding in a timely fashion, especially if a department is understaffed. Those departments in which graduate admissions is central to the department's activities tend to perform this function better than programs in which undergraduate education dominates.

Evaluating Credentials. Evaluation of credentials requires the accurate computation of grade point averages as required by the individual programs (e.g., overall undergraduate GPA, major GPA, final 60 credit GPA, etc.), the evaluation of international transcripts and TOEFL scores, and the monitoring for proof of undergraduate degree completion. These activities can be performed centrally or at the department level. Letters of recommendation are normally evaluated by the department, together with optional application material.

Certain functions, such as international credentials evaluation, generally require a specially trained staff and extensive (and expensive) reference materials. A central

admissions office is more likely to have resources to meet these needs. This central analysis can take place at either the university or the graduate school level.

Experienced graduate school personnel understand the uniqueness of graduate admissions in which faculty members and departmental committees have the major voice in determining who should be accepted. Thus, they can more suitably prepare the dossier which will be sent to the department and attempt to match the applicant to the program best suited to his or her interests and abilities. High priority files can be marked so that expedited action will be taken by the department.

Selecting Students for Admission. The faculty of the department recommends applicants for admission. Generally, this is done by the program director or, preferably, by a departmental committee, using campus-wide and program-specific standards. In some programs, students must take significant amounts of course work in other disciplines, in addition to courses in the specific field of study. In these cases, it may be wise to involve individuals from those disciplines in the review of credentials to ensure that the applicant has the necessary background to successfully complete the course work in those fields. The graduate office or graduate administrative unit should serve as a second level of review of all admissions decisions, not only those which deviate from established policy. Even the rejected applications should be carefully reviewed by the graduate office to ensure equitable and responsible admissions decisions.

The graduate school has the authority to enforce standards or, in exceptional cases, to waive requirements. Affirmative action policies, as they relate to graduate student admissions, are best monitored by the centralized graduate office. Even well-intentioned faculty in departments may overlook the responsibility of actively seeking qualified minority students.

Notifying Applicant and Relevant Offices of Admissions Decision. One administrator should be designated to communicate in writing the admission decision to the applicant and all relevant institutional offices such as housing, security (for parking permits), international, or health services. At institutions where there is a graduate office, this person usually is the graduate dean or his/her designee. When there is no graduate school, the admission or rejection letters typically are issued at the school level by its dean. Individual faculty members or department chairs should never make offers of admission either verbally or in writing unless authorized to do so by the graduate unit.

Maintaining Accurate Admissions Records. To respond to federal and institutional requests for information and to formulate strategic plans for the graduate programs, it is necessary to collect, analyze, and present data on the numbers and characteristics of applicants. Information on the rates of attrition from applications to acceptances to enrollments to degree completions should be kept for each program and augmented yearly

to provide a continuing record. Distribution of the reports should include admissions policy making bodies as well as admissions committee members.

Data should be maintained centrally wherever possible, but reviewed and evaluated by the faculty of the program to ensure accuracy. Consistent data input for all programs demands central responsibility for computer design and maintenance and data entry. Without such central control, all graduate programs may not have adequate or comparable computer access. Central data entry facilitates accurate statistics on such items as minority status, age, gender, programmatic interest, etc. This centralized database can be used to improve recruitment, to help with planning of future enrollments, and to monitor time to degree. Bowen and Rudenstine [*In Pursuit of the PhD*, p. 295] stated that "the desirability of centralized control over graduate school records is one indisputable lesson of this entire project."

Assessing Admissions Policies. Monitoring the outcomes of admissions policies in terms of student numbers, profile of the student body, academic success, and job placement should be a continuing process. It is very difficult to carry out the review of admissions actions and their impact on programs when there is no centralized review by the graduate school. While the department should annually assess its admission practices, the success of the graduate endeavor as a whole needs to be studied by a neutral party such as the graduate dean.

ESTABLISHING ADMISSIONS POLICIES

Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives of the Institution and Department

To be effective, admissions policies must be consistent with the philosophy of the institution. They must be realistic, readily understood, and have widespread support. The degree of selectivity should be influenced by the history, tradition, and academic values of the institution. Policies for admitting international, minority, non-traditional, physically impaired, or learning disabled students must be firmly grounded in an institutional commitment to providing resources to ensure that these students have the opportunity to pursue a graduate education and fulfill degree requirements. Graduate admissions policies follow a Federalist model: the graduate school defines the baseline academic admission standards and may set goals for the desired general population mix of the graduate student body, while the individual programs may refine and strengthen these requirements to assure the entry of students who demonstrate the promise of completing their chosen educational programs successfully, and, indeed, with distinction.

At the department level, special conditions may exist which help mold the admissions policy of that unit. Limited departmental resources, limited employment opportunities for graduates, or undergraduate teaching needs may dictate enrollment goals. When setting targeted enrollment numbers, however, the program must be cautious that it is doing so in the students' best interest. Too large or too small a class may not be conducive to their educational enrichment. In some programs, other non-academic factors may have major impacts on the probability of success in those fields of study. Prior employment history is quite relevant in business or public administration as are personality characteristics in fields such as counseling or social work.

Once the baseline performance measures for admissions have been established, it is prudent that the university legal counsel review them to assure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations affecting the admissions process.

Legal Issues

In what has been referred to as an "Age of Litigation," graduate admissions personnel should keep abreast of the laws, regulations, and legal issues affecting admissions.[1] Since 1960, a growing body of case law has developed dealing with the rights of students in the admissions process. Legal issues relevant to admissions involve the criteria upon which admissions decisions are made and the procedures by which admissions criteria are enacted. These criteria and procedures should be well documented and published in institutional announcements so both the prospective student and admissions committees are aware of the measures for admission. Such documents constitute a legal contract between the student and the institution.

This publication is not intended to include a definitive or exhaustive statement on legal issues affecting graduate admissions. It is not a substitute for professional advice from the university's legal counsel, and indeed, such advice should be sought concerning the appropriateness of admission requirements, application forms, and affirmative action programs. The text that follows is intended to raise the consciousness level of those persons involved in the admissions process regarding potential legal problems.

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[1]See *Legal Guide for Admissions Officers and Registrars* prepared by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers in conjunction with the National Association of College and University Attorneys for a more detailed description of legal issues in admissions.

Offers of Admission. Because the review of applicant dossiers by faculty is essential to the graduate admissions process, the potential exists for verbal offers of admission or acceptance letters emanating from departmental offices or individual faculty. However, a clearly defined administrative person (often the graduate dean) should be assigned the sole authority to offer admission to students. Because an employee can be sued if he or she has not acted within the scope of his or her authority, all personnel should be cognizant of who has the legal authority to admit students. Applicants should be informed in the application instructions that only written notice from the Dean of Graduate Studies (or whoever the designated person is) constitutes approval of admission, not correspondence with a department chair or with an individual faculty member.

Generally, the courts will not interfere in admissions standards decisions made by universities, provided they are reasonable, well publicized, and not in violation of applicable federal or state law. This deference to the university's autonomy is based on the theory that in academic matters the expertise of educators is superior to the judgement of the courts. However, certain aspects of the admissions process are subject to three general constraints:

> "(1) the selection process must not be arbitrary or capricious; (2) the institution may be bound, under contract theory, to adhere to its published admissions standards and to honor its admissions decisions; and (3) the institution may not have admissions policies that unjustifiably discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, handicap, or citizenship."[2]

Affirmative Action Plans. To date, comprehensive standards concerning affirmative action have not been established. However, two cases which have reached the Supreme Court, *Bakke* and *DeFunis*, have provided guidance concerning affirmative action policies. These cases, as well as other laws and court actions, indicate that affirmative action programs will have legal difficulties if:

a) they are not consistent with published admissions criteria,
b) they base admissions solely on the basis of race, sex, or other protected characteristic,
c) they use separate admission tracks for designated groups, or
d) they establish quotas or any numerical requirements which have the effect of imposing quotas for any designated group.

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[2]William A. Kaplan, *The Law of Higher Education*, 2nd ed., Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1985, p. 229.

If an institution is considering implementing an affirmative action program, it may take one of three approaches. However, there is a trade-off in risk vs. results. The risk of legal challenge increases as does the potential for increasing minority enrollment as one goes down the list.

A uniform system[3] of affirmative action consists of revising the admissions criteria so they are more sensitive to alternative measures of academic potential, such as work experience or a history of overcoming obstacles, and then applying these criteria to all applicants. A differential system uses a different standard of performance on a given admissions criterion for targeted groups. For example, different weightings may be given to test scores, or scores from alternative tests may be accepted. Standards can be modified only to the extent necessary to counteract a discriminatory effect which would result from non-modification. A preferential system of affirmative action allows for some form of preference for minority applicants. When an objective of the institution is to diversify its student body or to alleviate effects of past discrimination, then such a system might be employed. The key to a lawful preference system is to make race or ethnic background only one element in the rating scale, to be weighed fairly with other elements in the selection process.

Application Forms. When designing an application form, several legal factors must be taken into consideration. The Internal Revenue Service requires that a statement of racial nondiscrimination appear on all literature dealing with admissions. The Department of Education requires that all institutions receiving federal financial assistance include on their application forms a statement of nondiscrimination on the basis of sex. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 prohibit any preadmission inquiry about handicaps although such information may be asked after admission, on a voluntary basis. However, questions to assess the applicant's essential functional abilities related to a specific program, such as hearing for a nursing program, may be acceptable. The application form cannot ask marital status nor can it ask the applicant to give her maiden name.

Student Behavior. A developing legal issue in the admissions arena relates to the liability of the institution for acts of its students. In 1986, a public institution was found liable for admitting as a student an ex-felon. The university was not aware of the extensive criminal record of the student. It is generally permissible for an institution to make preadmission inquiries about prior criminal records although some state statutes prohibit discriminating against persons convicted of criminal offenses. In formulating criteria for rejecting applicants with criminal records, consideration should be given to the nature of the criminal activity and its relationship to a campus environment, the

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[3]This terminology comes from William A. Kaplan, *The Law of Higher Education*, 2nd Ed., p. 267.

elapsed time since the crime was committed, and the rehabilitation efforts of the applicant.

The Buckley Amendment. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), popularly known as the Buckley Amendment, generally defines the access rights of admitted students to their admissions records, except for confidential recommendations for which a valid waiver to the right of access has been signed by the student. Admitted students have the right to see comments written about them by admissions officers, whether these notes are kept separate from the student's permanent record or not. Some universities routinely destroy reports prepared by their admission offices once students are admitted, which is permissible as long as the student had not requested access to this material before it was destroyed.[4] Other institutions choose to keep the admission comments for assessment purposes; to check if their prediction about a student's potential matched his or her actual performance.

This Act does not apply to unsuccessful applicants, to accepted applicants who do not enroll, or to applicants applying to a different program at an institution they have already attended. Since the Buckley Amendment does not govern records of a person who has not attended an institution, many institutions choose to destroy, after a period of time (e.g., three years), application dossiers of students who were not accepted or who did not attend. Keeping the applicant's record for this period of time is useful in case of a complaint by a disappointed applicant or in case of a review by an outside agency.

Fraudulent Application. If a student submits a fraudulent application, he or she may have the admission rescinded or, if already in attendance, be subject to dismissal from the university. If the student has not yet enrolled, an opportunity to rebut the decision in writing constitutes sufficient action to satisfy due process requirements. At public institutions, if the student has commenced studies, he or she is entitled to a formal written notice of the charges, an opportunity to rebut the charges, an opportunity to retain the services of counsel at any hearing, confront the accusers, present evidence on his or her behalf, and receive a record of the hearing which took place before an unbiased disciplinary board. Private institutions do not have to follow due process procedures in dismissing students with fraudulent applications; however, they must follow their own published procedures in such actions.

Although one should be aware of potential legal problems, fear of a lawsuit should never deter anyone from fulfilling the role of his or her office. As non-lawyers, we are more likely to get into legal difficulties if we try to make our decisions on a legal rather

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[4]Taken from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "Students Have Right to See Comments of Admissions Officers, Education Department Rules," Volume XXXVIII, Number 30, April 1, 1992, p. A1.

than an academic basis. The courts will generally uphold decisions made with good academic judgment and an earnest effort to act within the law.

Application Requirements and Selection Standards

Baseline admission standards (those applicable to all degree applicants) are generally set in one of two ways, depending on the administrative organization of the institution. Where there is a central graduate unit, standards are set by a council of faculty representative of all graduate degrees and programs. In decentralized systems, specific administrative entities such as a College of Art and Sciences or a College of Education establish faculty councils which set the standards. In either case, departments may require additional material or set more stringent standards. These standards will determine what credentials will be required from the applicant.

Generally the graduate administrative unit sets a minimum overall undergraduate grade point index which the student should have earned to be considered for admission. This minimum usually ranges between 2.7 and 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Departments may set higher minimum standards. Departments may also stipulate the minimum grade point averages to be achieved in the desired major or during the last year or two of undergraduate study. When calculating the grade point average, all previous transcripts should be evaluated. Admissions committees should pay attention to when the GPA was achieved, since grading standards generally have become less rigorous over time. In cases where exceptional circumstances incline faculty to want to admit a student with a grade point average below the standards set, the graduate dean or the officer responsible for graduate education should have the authority to make the final decision.

Required Application Material. Regardless of what standards are set by individual departments, all applications to graduate programs should include, at a minimum, the following elements:

1. An application form.
2. Official transcripts of all previous academic work[5] (with certified translations for non-English transcripts) from which undergraduate grade point averages can be computed.
3. Letters of recommendation.
4. Proof of English competency for international students for whom English is not the first language.

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[5]Some institutions accept unofficial transcripts or last 60 hours transcripts for screening or evaluation purposes. Students who are accepted must submit official transcripts at a later date. See pages 48 and 49 for further discussion.

The application form. There are almost as many different versions of application forms as there are graduate institutions. Indeed, there may be different forms in use within a given institution. This is not an ideal situation for the university, which requires a uniform database for report generation and institutional research and planning, nor for the student who may apply to two or more programs within the same school. A simple, common application form for all graduate programs should be developed, requesting student identification data, demographic data (basically for reporting purposes and institutional research), and information to assist in the admission decision. Individual departments could supplement this common form with program specific requirements.

Biographical data should include the student's name and other names or alternative spellings which may appear on transcripts or test score reports, permanent and temporary addresses and telephone numbers (with a date indicating when the temporary address will no longer be valid), social security number, date and place of birth, citizenship, visa information (a checklist of possible visa types, e.g. student [F1], exchange [J1], permanent resident [PR], etc. is preferable to a blank space), and native language.

Demographic data collection can create difficulties since applicants may believe it counts against them in the admission process. Yet federal, state, and institutional report requirements mandate the collection of ethnic, sex, age, and handicap information. As mentioned in the section on legal issues, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits preadmission inquiries about handicaps (unless an institution is taking remedial action to correct effects of past discrimination), so this information cannot be obtained from an admissions application. Ethnic data can be obtained prior to admission, but it must be on a voluntary basis. When asking for ethnic information, the ethnic categories should be clearly defined and the list should include all categories of interest to the institution. For example, the category "Asian or Pacific Islander" could be defined as "Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. The area includes, for example, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa." [The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Application Form. See Appendix B: II, C.] The category "decline to respond" should also be included.

The Council of Graduate Schools' annual survey asks for a breakdown of Hispanic background into three groups: Puerto Rican, Mexican American, and Other. Institutions should consider modifying their application forms to include these categories.

Some institutions include a disclaimer with the ethnicity question, saying it will be used only for reporting purposes. However, if race (or sex) is being used in the admission process to identify special groups as part of an affirmative action or diversity initiative, it is important that such a disclaimer be omitted. A statement such as the following may be appropriate: "The purpose of this inquiry is to assess the effectiveness of the University's recruitment efforts and to facilitate selection of a diverse student body. Since the University does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnic origin, the answer to this question or the omission of an answer will not influence the University's decision on admission." [Taken from the University of Pennsylvania Application Form.]

Academic data should include a list of all institutions previously attended. Many application forms request dates and scores for GRE, GMAT, MAT, and TOEFL. Since these student reported scores should not be accepted for admission purposes, requesting this information is not necessary, although the application form might tell the student to request these scores be sent directly from Educational Testing Service.

Program related data includes name(s) of program(s) to which the student is applying and area of specialization (if applicable), graduate degree objective, full or part time status, and date of anticipated enrollment. For state institutions, legal residency must be ascertained. Additional questions, such as whether the applicant wishes to be considered for financial aid or whether the applicant has ever applied (or attended) the institution before might be included on the general form.

As stated in the legal issues section above, all application materials must contain a non-discrimination statement. This could be of the form "(Name of University) does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, age, sex, marital or handicapped status in any of its policies, procedures, programs, or practices. Any grievances pertaining to discrimination should be directed to (Name of appropriate person)." If the institution has clearly identified how it will utilize the information, questions may be asked pertaining to the criminal record of the applicant (see legal section above) or previous academic ineligibility at any college or university.

Program specific questions including those related to employment history, courses in progress, publications, research experience, honors or awards, etc. can be asked as part of the personal statement, if the department desires this information. Material requested should be necessary for the intelligent evaluation of the applicant and not on a "nice to know" basis.

Official transcripts. It must be stressed that *official* transcripts from all institutions attended need to be submitted. Since the possibility of fraudulent records always exists, it is highly recommended that only transcripts sent directly from the issuing institution to the admission unit be accepted. Some risk is involved even when official transcripts are placed in a sealed envelope and given to the student either to be hand delivered or placed in an application packet envelope.

For evaluation purposes only, some universities accept unofficial copies of the student's transcript or transcripts faxed from the student's undergraduate school. When this is the case, if the student is accepted, it should be a provisional (or tentative) acceptance, pending receipt within a specific time frame of official copies of all transcripts.

Since a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution is generally a prerequisite for admission to any graduate program, it is important to ascertain that such a degree has indeed been earned. When an applicant is admitted before completing the bachelor's degree, some sort of mechanism needs to be in place to ensure that the degree has been awarded before the student may enroll in graduate classes. At a minimum, the student should be admitted conditionally pending submission of an official transcript showing the awarding of the degree. A certified document from the student's institution stating that all requirements for the bachelor's degree have been satisfied may be sufficient to permit matriculation, but the student still must submit an official transcript when it is available.

The question of accreditation of an institution can be confusing to both the applicant and the admissions office. The American Council on Education publishes a booklet which lists all regionally accredited institutions, *1990-91 Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education*. Students sometimes confuse regional accreditation with professional accreditation. Regional accreditation is carried out by one of the six regional accrediting organizations and applies to the institution. Specialized or programmatic accreditation is carried out by national organizations which represent a professional or specialized discipline, and applies to specific programs such as pharmacy, law, etc. The pertinent consideration with respect to graduate admission is regional accreditation.

International transcripts which are not in English should have certified English translations. The application instructions should stipulate that a literal, not interpretive, translation is required. Resources (reference materials and trained evaluators) must be available to provide an adequate review of foreign transcripts since these can pose problems with respect to degree equivalence, grading systems, and quality of the institution. Generally, a minimum of sixteen years of schooling and an earned degree equivalent to an American bachelor's degree is required of all applicants. On occasion, graduates of three-year postsecondary programs in prestigious universities may be well qualified. In this case, admission offices need to work closely with departmental admissions committees to identify those students who demonstrate the ability to successfully complete the graduate program.

A number of valuable materials for international admissio ns are available. For institutions enrolling fewer than fifty foreign students, a free se ervice to help with the evaluation of foreign credentials is available from regional spec ialists identified by the Credentials Evaluation Service of the Association of Internationa al Educators (NAFSA). The World Education Series, published by AACRAO provid es descriptions of the educational systems of a number of countries, with recommendati ons for placement. The CGS publication *International Graduate Students, A Guide for G raduate Deans, Faculty and Administrators*, provides guidance to those who work with inte rnational students.

In rare instances, a student is unable to obtain a copy of his/h er transcript. Fire may have destroyed records at an institution. In countries where th here has been political upheaval, documents may have been destroyed or simply may no t be obtainable. When institutions close, all records are usually transferred to another site , but students may not be able to trace the location of their records. However, an admis sions officer should be very skeptical about a student's claim that a transcript is not av ailable. On the other hand, if follow-up checks reveal that the transcript is not available , an institution should consider accepting a notarized or otherwise certified statement fr om the student of the courses taken and grades received. In this case, other applicatio n credentials would be given more weight in the application process. A provisional acc eptance would provide the student an opportunity to verify his or her abilities.

Occasionally, a person who does not have a bachelor's degree an d is not enrolled in an undergraduate degree program may apply to graduate school. For domestic students, this sometimes occurs when an older applicant with extensive practica al experience in a field desires to further his or her academic knowledge of the subject. On the international level, students seeking political or social asylum who may not hav e completed all course work for the degree may request to make up the deficiencies prior to or concurrent with their graduate work. As more students from Eastern Europe s eek entry to graduate schools in the United States, this problem may grow. It is extrem ely important that the institution have a clear view of the policy it wishes to follow in t these cases. Whether for a domestic or an international student, deviation from th e published norm of admission requirements must be grounded in sound educational pr inciples and rooted in the mission of the institution, and admission of such students should occur in only extremely unusual circumstances.

Letters of recommendation. Most institutions require two or three letters of recommendation. Applicants should be given some general guidance by the institution regarding what is expected in these letters. There should be at least one letter required from someone who is familiar with the applicant's previous academic work and in general, letters from former professors are preferred, especially those representing the applicant's major field. Students should be advised that letters from prominent individuals or from friends have little or no impact if these persons cannot properly evaluate the applicant's ability to do graduate work. However, letters which can describe the applicant's background experiences, motivation, or capacity to succeed should be included. These could come from employers or other people familiar with the strengths of the student.

The form for the letter of recommendation should be defined by or in consultation with the department. A combination of an open-ended letter and a checklist of specific attributes helps to assure that information useful to the department is obtained. Since the effectiveness of a letter of recommendation often hinges upon the writing style of the recommender, a checklist also makes it easier to compare letters of recommendation. Forms for letters of reference should be provided with printed statements on them permitting the applicant to waive the right to see the letter of reference.

The writers of letters of recommendation should be given specific advise on what kind of information to include in the open-ended letter relative to the requirements of the field. An indication of how long the writer has known the applicant and in what capacity is important information. Also, the writer should be advised that no reference should be made either directly or indirectly to the applicant's handicap, if there is one (in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973). [See Iowa State University's form, Appendix B: IV.] Letters of recommendation are not a common part of the admissions process at foreign institutions, so more precise descriptions of what is expected will increase the likelihood of receiving satisfactory letters from individuals overseas. Examples of letter of recommendation forms are included in Appendix B:IV.

If the admissions committee is not familiar with the recommender or is not sure of the credibility of the recommender, a call to that person might be helpful. Any ambiguities or contradictions of other supporting documents could also be clarified in this way. A letter thanking the recommender may encourage the person to direct future students to your institution and, additionally, can help to ensure that the person wrote the letter you acknowledged receiving.

Proof of English competency. All students for whom English is not the first language, with the possible exception of those who have completed a degree at an accredited institution in an English speaking country where English was the language of instruction, must provide proof of English proficiency. Institutions offering courses in English for foreign students can modify academic course loads to allow for additional concurrent language training, and thus may be able to consider applicants with a lower range of scores on tests of English ability than can institutions that have limited or no additional language training.

Although some institutions exempt from any further proof of English proficiency those students who have completed ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction at an English language institute and others routinely test students after they arrive on campus, most schools require score reports from a recognized testing organization, most notably the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) provided by Educational Testing Service (ETS). Other English tests are available such as the American Language Institute of Georgetown University (ALIGU), the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB), or the United Kingdom's English Language Training Service (ELTS), although these are not as widely available. Since a student's ability to study material in the English language hinges on his/her English proficiency, an offer of admission should not be made unless it has been verified objectively that the student has adequate English proficiency for that campus environment. It is ill-advised to accept the word of faculty or other institutional employees that an international applicant has sufficient mastery of English. Postponement of admission pending improvement of English language skills is preferable to failure or unanticipated delays in degree completion due to language difficulties. The graduate dean or division graduate administrator should insist on proof of minimal English proficiency regardless of the pressures from departments.

Institutions which use TOEFL test scores should consider several factors in evaluating the student's ability to succeed in graduate school.[6] TOEFL evaluates an individual's ability to understand written and spoken English. It is not a measure of scholastic aptitude or ability to adapt to an English-speaking environment. As with all standardized exams, the TOEFL cannot measure perfectly the English ability of the applicant, so absolute cut-off scores should not be used. TOEFL total scores are reported on a scale that can range from 200-677, while section scores can range from 20-68. These scores are not related to the distribution of scores on any other test, such as the SAT or the GRE tests, so admissions personnel should be cognizant of this difference.

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[6]Much of the following material is adapted from material distributed by the Educational Testing Service, especially *Guidelines for the Use of TOEFL Scores* and *TSE Manual for Score Users*.

The TOEFL test has three sections: listening comprehension, structure and written expression, and vocabulary and reading comprehension. Attention should be paid to each of these sections individually, not to just the total TOEFL score. In establishing the range of acceptable TOEFL scores, the institution should be guided by results of a survey of institutional policies published in *Guidelines for the Use of TOEFL Scores*, published by the Educational Testing Service. Different fields of study may require different English proficiency levels, so acceptable TOEFL scores may vary by discipline as well as by institution.

The TOEFL score can be useful in interpreting an applicant's performance on other standardized tests. When TOEFL scores are low, high verbal scores on another standardized test represent an inconsistency that should be investigated. On the other hand, when TOEFL scores are low and scores on another standardized test are also low, it is possible that the applicant's performance on the second test may have been impaired because of deficiencies in English.

Since TOEFL is a multiple-choice test, it does not measure the applicant's ability to write or speak English. Therefore, two other tests have been developed by ETS to measure the student's writing and speaking ability, respectively. The Test of Written English (TWE) is a thirty-minute essay test which assesses the applicant's ability to organize ideas and to support these ideas using the conventions of standard written English. Institutions may use this test result to place students in appropriate writing courses. Scores range from 1 to 6. A score of 6 clearly demonstrates competence in writing, while a score of 1 shows either incompetence in writing or an unattempted essay (with the distinction between these two noted on the score report).

The Test of Spoken English (TSE) is often required to evaluate an applicant's spoken English for teaching assistantships or to diagnose areas of weakness in spoken English for remedial placement. As with the TOEFL scores, the establishment of score requirements for a graduate program should be based on several factors. The *Test of Spoken English Manual for Score Users* published by ETS provides guidelines for setting and validating acceptable standards. The level of required English proficiency that is tolerable as well as the resources available to improve speaking proficiency will help determine the standard score acceptable in a specific program.

Score reports include four different test scores: a score for overall comprehensibility and scores for three diagnostic areas--pronunciation, grammar, and fluency. Each score is derived from a different rating scale and the scores are independent of one another. The overall comprehensibility score ranges from 0 to 300, with scores below 150 considered generally not comprehensible. Pronunciation, grammar and fluency scores range from 0.0 to 3.0, with scores below 1.5 generally indicating non-intelligibility.

The Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) is a campus-administered version of TSE used mainly to test the oral proficiency of students in English language programs or to retest students who did not satisfy spoken English requirements for teaching assistantships on an earlier test. Further information about SPEAK is available from the TOEFL Program Office.

Institutions should regularly evaluate their TOEFL, TWE, and TSE requirements to ensure they are consistent with the institution's own academic requirements and the language training resources available on the campus. Setting standards too high may deny qualified students admission to the graduate program. Setting them too low will result in a large number of students being unsuccessful because of language deficiencies. In addition, since a person's language proficiency may change with time, test results more than two years old may not be reliable and should be discounted as verification of current English ability.

Since a student's ability to use the English language can have a marked effect on academic success, institutions should waive this requirement only in extremely unusual cases and then only if they have adequate assurance that the applicant has the necessary English proficiency. Some institutions require that students submit adequate TOEFL scores before they are sent application materials so that applicants not sufficiently proficient in English do not waste either their own or the institution's time or incur the costs (application fee, other test requirement fees, transcript fees, postage, etc.) associated with processing a full application.

Since many international students have a strong desire to study in the United States and Canada, there have been reported cases of falsified TOEFL scores submitted to institutions. Only official scores mailed directly from Educational Testing Service should be accepted. If there is any question about the validity of a TOEFL score, ETS will verify the accuracy of the scores and whether an official report was issued.

Optional Application Materials. Additional credentials required by some institutions, departments or programs may include standardized test scores, a personal statement, writing samples, or examples of the student's work. Some programs may request an interview or an audition; others may request submission of a portfolio or require verification of relevant work or research experience. Supporting materials required by a program should be requested only with a clear rationale for doing so. It is important to know what these materials are expected to demonstrate. It is equally important that the student be told what attributes are being assessed. In evaluating an applicant's dossier, the aim should be to understand the student's background in order to broaden the admissions committee's perception of the student's capabilities.

Some institutions, particularly those in Canada, recommend a documentation of funding from those students who cannot be supported by the institution or outside funding agencies.

Standardized test scores: GRE, GMAT, Miller Analogies Test (MAT).[7] Regard-less of which test scores are required, there are two major concepts that the admissions personnel must keep in mind when evaluating the submitted results: 1) a test score should never be the sole criterion for acceptance or denial of admission and 2) cutoff scores below which every applicant is categorically rejected are inappropriate. No test (indeed, no one admission credential) can measure all the skills needed for success in graduate school. A low test score does not necessarily reflect an applicant's inability to learn, but may reveal a deficiency resulting from a different educational, economic, or social background. Multiple sources of information should be used in the admissions process to identify students who not only have academic credentials, but are committed to learning and motivated to succeed.

Multiple criteria are particularly important when relying on standardized test scores to assess the abilities of educationally disadvantaged students, international students, and students who are returning to school after an extended period of absence. Differences in early education and undergraduate course content and selection may result in lower test performance.[8]

The GRE, GMAT, and MAT tests were developed for students who were educated in the United States. When interpreting a foreign student's score, linguistic, cultural, and educational factors must be considered.

Standardized tests are offered under special arrangements to students with disabilities. Because so few handicapped students have taken tests under these non-standard conditions, and because different disabilities have highly varied effects on whether test scores accurately represent the developed abilities of the examinee as they will become apparent in graduate school, no normative data have been developed for interpreting the scores of these examinees. Institutions may wish to consider waiving the test score requirement for these students, or, understanding that the test score may not reflect the applicant's educational achievements, place less importance on its influence in the admission decision.

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[7]Much of the following material is adapted from documents developed by the GRE Board composed of 18 members, the majority of whom are graduate deans.

[8]See the Educational Testing Service's publication, *Sex, Race, Ethnicity, and Performance on the GRE General Test.*

Many students take standardized tests more than once. When more than one score is reported, several approaches to the interpretation of the score report are possible. One technique is to average the several reported scores. Both the GRE and the GMAT guidelines recommend this approach, especially if the tests were taken over a short period of time. Some departments prefer to use the most recent score reported, while others use the highest score reported. Whatever approach is adopted, it should be used consistently with all applicants.

A department that uses standardized tests in the admission process should attempt to demonstrate empirically the relationship between the test scores and measures of performance in its academic program. Programs can make use of the Graduate Record Examinations' Validity Study Service (for GRE scores) or the Graduate Management Admission Council's Validity Study Service (for GMAT scores), which are free of charge, or may conduct their own studies. Advice on the design of appropriate validation studies is available from GRE program staff free of charge.

Only official copies of score reports should be accepted. These should be sent directly from the Educational Testing Service (for GRE or GMAT results) or from the Psychological Corporation (for MAT scores). If scores are more than five years old, caution in their interpretation is advised. An applicant's developed ability may have changed either positively or negatively in the time since the exam was taken, depending upon life experiences.

When institutions use standardized test scores as part of the admissions process, they have the responsibility of ensuring that all individuals who interpret these scores know the policies and guidelines set down by the testing agency. They should monitor the use of the scores, and correct instances of misuse when identified. Users of GRE test scores should obtain and read the *Guide to the Use of the Graduate Record Examinations Program*, *Guidelines for the Use of GRE Scores*, and *Sex, Race, Ethnicity and Performance on the GRE General Test*, published for the Graduate Record Examinations Board by Educational Testing Service. GMAT test users should obtain and read the *Guide to the Use of GMAT Scores*, available from the Graduate Management Admission Council. Miller Analogies Test users should read the *Miller Analogies Test Manual, 1981*, published by The Psychological Corporation.

Distinctions between students should not be based upon small differences in standardized test scores. Standard errors of measurement vary by test and are available in the *Guides* of the respective tests.

The GRE *Guidelines* recommend that GRE verbal, quantitative, and analytical scores be used as three distinct measures which should not be combined. Since the kind of reasoning skills required for success varies by field, departments may wish to establish weights for the three measures reflecting the program's emphasis on particular skills. Should this be done, the weighting must be based on empirical evidence, and the reliability of such a measure should be tested by validity studies[3].

Although the analytical score has been reported since 1982, many departments are not sure how to interpret it. It has been found that the analytical score serves to validate the verbal score for international students where language difficulties may bias the results. That is, a low verbal score and a low analytical score usually indicates deficiencies in the verbal area; whereas a low verbal score and a high analytical score may indicate that language difficulty contributed to the verbal measure. Similarly, for women over the age of 30 who might have math anxiety, the analytical score may be better measure of quantitative ability than the quantitative score.

The maximum score obtainable on each section of the GRE General Aptitude Test is 800 with a minimum score of 200. GRE Subject Test scores range from 200 to 980. GRE General Test scores are not directly comparable to GRE Subject Test Scores or any other graduate or undergraduate admission test. Similarly, Subject Test scores should not be compared with other scores on another Subject Test. For example, a 700 on the Physics Test is not equivalent to a 700 on the Engineering Test. Percentile ranks should be compared only if they are based on the same reference population.

Subject tests have been used primarily for Ph.D. programs. For these programs however, it has been found that subject test scores add significantly to GPA and scores on the GRE General Test as predictors of first year graduate grades.

Beginning in October 1992, students have the option of taking a computerized version of the GRE exam. Identical to the paper and pencil version, this test format has the advantage of being offered 150 times a year and students will receive instantaneous score reporting. In October 1993, an adaptive computerized version of the GRE will be offered. Admission personnel should be aware of these changes, although they are unlikely to have an effect on score interpretation.

The GMAT scale is similar to the GRE scale in that scores may range from 200 to 800. However, comparisons of a person's GMAT score with scores on the GRE or other admissions tests are not appropriate. The content of the tests are quite different and the populations taking the various tests have different characteristics. It is unwise to estimate a GMAT score from a person's GRE General Test score or vice versa.

The GMAT has been consistently shown to be a good predictor of performance in the first year of study in MBA or similar degree programs. It has not been generally established that the GMAT is a valid predictor in other programs, such as a doctoral business program or programs in health administration or public administration. Use of the GMAT in these types of programs should be based on the results of individual institutions' validity studies.

The Miller Analogies Test consists of one hundred analogy questions. Typically taken by applicants to education, social science, or humanities graduate programs, the test requires the student to synthesize from three given words a fourth word that best completes the analogy. Miller Analogies Test scores can range from 0 to 100, reflecting the number of questions answered correctly on the test. Two percentile scores are also given, one comparing the students' performance relative to individuals in the same intended major, the other ranking the student's performance within the general population of MAT examinees. Percentile norms for applicants to graduate programs by field of study are available from The Psychological Corporation. Foreign student scores are not included in the normed data.

Personal statement. Some programs ask students to provide a personal statement that may be open-ended or answers specific questions. Typically, academic and career objectives, research activities or interest, work related experiences, and other accomplishments are topics requested to be covered. The open-ended response might give the applicant an opportunity to provide further evidence of potential success as a graduate student that is not reflected in the standard application materials, such as test scores or grade point average. Attitudes, values, motivation, determination, and creativity may play an important role in assessing an applicant's potential for success. Whatever statement the department requires, it should have a systematic way of evaluating it. [See Appendix B:V for examples of Personal Statement forms.]

Writing sample or examples of student's written work. As with the personal statement, some departments ask that a student submit a writing sample, such as a graded research paper, thesis, or other written evidence of research or writing ability. Whatever form it takes, the department should have a reason for requiring this material and a mechanism for assessing its value.

Interview. Especially in programs where personality characteristics can influence success in the field, an interview can help identify those individuals who are likely to perform well in their graduate studies. Interviews also help students analyze their probable "fit" with the department. On-campus interviews should not be made

compulsory if travel to the institution causes an undue hardship for the applicant. Some schools will conduct interviews by telephone or send representatives out into the field to interview applicants closer to their homes or provide travel assistance to bring students to campus. For international applicants, these approaches have limited value. When interviews are a significant element in the admissions process, the structure of the interview and the approach of the interviewer must assure an unbiased evaluation of the applicant. If interviews are not compulsory, serious consideration must be given to how an interview affects the admission decision.

Portfolio/audition, work/research experience. In many disciplines, faculty expect students to have had practical experience in the field. In order to assess an applicant's ability in the fine or creative arts, the submission of a portfolio or an audition (in person or on videotape) generally is required. Caution is needed when the applicant submits an audiotaped voice sample or musical performance, since the possibility exists that the work is not the product of the applicant.

In business or management disciplines, where faculty expect to build on the knowledge base attained through prior or concurrent work experience, a requirement of prior employment in a business environment may be imposed. Prior research experience is a significant factor for entrance into most doctoral programs in the sciences.

Admissions Categories

Students whose records satisfy all general requirements for admission and have been judged by their proposed departments to be completely satisfactory for graduate study are accorded **Regular** or **Full** admission status. Students whose records fall short of meeting all general and departmental requirements may be awarded **Conditional** or **Provisional** status. This category may cover either of two situations: there is specific information, such as GRE scores, missing from the student's file, or the student is deficient in some academic area. These are very different cases. In the first, the student's records of prior work are incomplete but all submitted documents indicate the student to be admissible, and all that is required for consideration for full admission is that the missing items be submitted. In the second, the student's records are complete, and based on their evaluation, the admitting department is imposing additional requirements in order to determine the student's academic ability or to make up for academic deficiencies. In this case, the conditions imposed often consist of a requirement for a certain level of performance in a specified course or courses taken during the first term or year in graduate school. Students in this status should be told exactly what conditions must be met before they can petition for regular or full status. It is essential that the student's progress be tracked each term and if timely progress towards satisfying the provisional requirements is not made, that appropriate action be taken. This monitoring should be done by the graduate office, or, where no graduate school exists, at the school level. Students accepted

provisionally because of academic deficiencies should not be considered for assistantships until these deficiencies are removed.

Some departments in U.S. institutions admit students with bachelor's degrees directly into their doctoral programs, while other U.S. doctoral programs require a master's degree in the field before admission. In most Canadian universities however, direct admission to a Ph.D. program for applicants with a bachelor's degree is rare. Truly outstanding students who have already demonstrated research potential might be granted admission without first obtaining a master's degree. Students receiving a Canadian honours degree with A or A+ standing who have completed an exemplary undergraduate research project or thesis or have evidence of outstanding performance in a summer research setting would be candidates for direct admission.

Because graduate studies often attract a much broader population than just degree-oriented students, many non-degree status designations appear in graduate admissions. Students may intend to transfer graduate credits to another institution, use graduate credits for professional development or a pre-master's certificate program, enroll for personal satisfaction, "prove" themselves academically qualified for a program that has not accepted them, or accomplish other ends. It is tempting to set up as many status categories as there are reasons for enrolling (e.g., Transfer Credit, Audit Only, Non-matriculating, Tentative, Special Status, etc.), but unless there is a good reason to do so, it is better to minimize the number of categories and if possible, include all these non-degree students under one rubric such as **Non-matriculating** or **Special** or **Non-degree**.

Requirements for admission to a non-degree status vary widely across institutions. Some schools require the same entrance requirements as for degree students, others require only proof of a bachelor's degree, while still others are somewhere between these extremes. Since non-degree students will enroll in the same classes as degree seeking students, some mechanism should be in place to assure that the quality of graduate study is maintained. This is especially true when non-matriculating students are not admitted under the purview of the graduate school, as may occur when a separate continuing education office exists on a campus. Many institutions require departmental approval or permission of the instructor before a student is admitted to a class. Once permission is granted, students are allowed to enroll on a space available basis.

Some institutions restrict registration of non-degree students to a set number of terms. One reason for setting a limited number of terms for enrollment is to prevent a student from approaching degree status "through the back door" by taking all course work for a degree and then petitioning for degree candidacy. The difficulty with stating a set number of terms for enrollment is that a student who reached that specified limit would have to gain admission to a degree program or take courses at another institution if he or she wished to continue taking courses. If the student does not choose to attend or cannot

attend another school, but wishes to continue to take classes for personal enrichment only, he or she would have to apply to a degree program even though having little interest in obtaining a degree. Therefore, rather than limit the number of terms in attendance, it could be made clear at admission whether or not any credit earned in a non-degree status can be transferred to a degree program, should the student later seek admission and be accepted for an advanced degree. A range of from 0 to 12 semester hours (0-16 quarter hours) is generally the maximum number of graduate credits that may be applied toward a graduate degree (most typically 9 semester or 10 quarter hours), pending approval of the department. Some institutions have the student sign a statement of understanding which informs the student that although an unlimited number of courses may be taken as a non-degree student (subject to other department restrictions), only a set maximum may be counted toward a degree. It also states that taking courses does not automatically evolve into admission to a degree program.

Many institutions have a special status for persons with a bachelor's degree who are seeking to become certified teachers. Students in this category often take a combination of undergraduate and graduate courses, the completion of which does not lead to a degree. Upon successful completion of the prescribed course work, they are eligible to apply for state teacher certification. Requirements for **Certification** status are generally the same as for degree seeking students within the School of Education. As for all non-degree status students, it is recommended that a limit be placed on the number of credits of graduate study a student may take while in certification status. Since these students may plan to continue beyond the certification status to seek a master's degree, careful monitoring of their progress will help ensure that they reapply to the appropriate degree program when eligible.

Students may request to have their admission **deferred** to a term later than the one originally specified on their application. Whether this request is granted depends upon the nature of the program. Deferral of admission is usually denied in programs where the class size is fixed and enrollment of men and women from different backgrounds and demographic groups is sought to enhance the educational experience. Decisions to defer admission for one year or less usually is the prerogative of the department.

In cases where there are more qualified applicants than space permits, some students may be placed on a waiting list. Accepted students should be asked to complete a "Statement of Intention to Register" form and may be requested to remit a deposit to reserve their spots. This aids the institution in assessing the probability that a student on a waiting list will gain admission, and permits a more reliable answer to student inquiries.

Some institutions may allow a student with incomplete application materials to register for graduate course work. An applicant admitted under this condition must present complete application materials within the first term of enrollment. Such

enrollment does not guarantee acceptance into the graduate program and the student should clearly understand this. The applicant is essentially a non-degree status student and the same conditions for course enrollment and course transferability to a graduate program should apply.

Readmission Policies

Formal application for readmission should not be required of a student who is returning from an approved leave of absence. A student who has not been active in a graduate program for more than one year and who did not obtain a leave of absence should file a readmission form. Some institutions also charge a readmission fee. The department makes the determination as to whether the student's status should be reactivated. If programmatic changes were made during the student's absence, the department may hold the student to the new policies. At the time of reinstatement, students should also be informed as to their current status with regard to credits, time limits and other factors affecting their programs.

Admitted applicants who did not enroll for the term in which they were admitted and did not obtain permission to defer admission should consult the department to determine if they are eligible to enroll in the succeeding term or year. If a year or more has passed since admission was granted, the student should reapply. Supplementary transcripts covering any academic work completed since the initial application should be submitted. Since some institutions destroy application materials within a set time frame (usually three years from the application date in the U.S., one to two years in Canada) for applicants who did not enroll, the applicant should confirm that original application materials are still on file and still accurately reflect his or her academic background, and if not, resubmit the required documents.

Students who have been dismissed from the graduate program for academic reasons should address a written request for readmission to the department of their major. The request should include reasons why the reinstatement should be considered. The department should review the request and make a recommendation to the graduate dean or administrator designated as the admitting officer for graduate programs. The final decision for readmission in these cases should be made by the graduate dean/administrator in accordance with policies set by the institution (generally by a graduate council or similar body.)

Some institutions do not charge a fee for reapplication. Others require the same fee as for an original application, while still others require the fee only if the original file has been destroyed.

Transfer Policies

Students planning to transfer from one graduate institution to another should be required to submit the same admission credentials as the typical first time applicant. If admission is granted, the student should be advised whether any of the course work completed at the prior institution will apply toward the degree. For master's degree programs, a limited number of credits ranging from 6 to 12 semester hours (4 to 12 quarter hours) with an average of 6 semester hours (9 quarter hours) is generally the maximum allowed to be petitioned for transfer. In doctoral programs, at a minimum the transfer student should be required to take the comprehensive or admission to candidacy exams at the new institution. Course work completed at another institution should not be transferred if it does not fall within the time to degree requirements set at the new institution.

Students who request to transfer from one degree program to another within the same institution should complete a reapplication form. Such students should be in good academic standing (overall grade point average of 3.0 or greater on a 4.0 scale) and hold full or regular status. Generally, the application credentials required by the new department will have to be submitted with the exception of transcripts already on file. The application should then be processed in the usual manner for a new applicant. The decision concerning which, if any, courses taken in the original program may apply to the new program should be made by the new department.

Advanced Admission for Undergraduates

Undergraduate students with exceptional academic backgrounds often are allowed to petition to take graduate course work as part of their undergraduate experience. Permission to take courses should be granted on a course by course basis, upon approval by the instructor, department head, and graduate dean or graduate division administrator. The total course load for an undergraduate student enrolled for graduate course work should not exceed 15 semester (15 quarter) hours.

These undergraduate students may later enroll in a graduate program and request graduate credit for this work. If the course work was over and above the requirements for the undergraduate degree, as verified in writing by the undergraduate institution's registrar or other appropriate officer, a graduate institution may consider granting transfer credit in accordance with its general transfer credit policies, although this is generally done only for a school's own undergraduate/graduate students.

Application to More Than One Degree Program

Some institutions explicitly prohibit applicants from applying to more than one degree program at a time. [UCLA and Berkeley for example.] Others permit only one program application; however, an applicant may designate an alternative field on the

application form. If admission to the first choice is denied, th
considered by the alternative field [Cornell]. Still other sc
applications [UNC-Chapel Hill]. Since an overarching objective
should be to find a good match between the student and the dep
student may not have time to apply to an alternate department aft
of admission, it would seem that giving the student the oppo
alternative field would be in everyone's best interest.

he application will be
hools allow multiple
of graduate admissions
artment, and because a
er receiving a rejection
ortunity to specify an

At some institutions, students may apply to dual or concurren
work toward completion of the degrees simultaneously. The p
courses can count toward both degrees should be set by a commit
(such as a graduate council) and approved by the appropriate stat
where necessary.

t degree programs and
olicy of whether any
ttee of graduate faculty
e educational agencies,

IMPLEMENTING ADMISSIONS POLICY

The Admissions Decision

The recommendation to accept or reject a student comes fro
through its school dean, to the graduate dean or designated official
denial of admission. Considering the wide variety of circumstan
lives of today's graduate school applicants, departments are encou
assessing applicants while still maintaining admission standards.
institution is to increase multi-cultural diversity, or to increase
represented students in a discipline, or to increase opportunities
(older) student, it is especially important that admissions personne
admissability instead of the usual signs to reject. Letters of rec
statements, and interviews may play a major role in determining th
these students and their chosen major field of study.

m a department, often
for final acceptance or
nces that influence the
raged to be flexible in
When a goal of the
the number of under-
for the non-traditional
l look for indicators of
ommendation, personal
e potential fit between

At the department or program level, recommendations for ad
made by the program director or by an admissions committee. Wh
both junior and senior faculty representing differing specializations
should serve on this committee. An effort should be made to inclu
gender and ethnicity. The role of graduate students on the commit
considered in light of constraints upon their access to personal rec
and liability factors associated with admissions decisions. In som
serve on admissions committees, they do so as non-voting member

dmission are generally
ere a committee exists,
s within the department
ude a mix of faculty by
ttee should be carefully
cords of other students
e cases where students
rs.

To debate the merits of the applicant, admissions committees s
a group rather than merely circulate the applicant's dossier. Acti
member may not consider an important aspect of the applicatio
bearing on the admission decision. Meeting as a committee also
delays in applicant processing, which is possible if a committee
the dossier in an expedient manner.

hould meet together as
ng alone, a committee
n which could have a
helps prevent untimely
member fails to review

There are instances where factors other than the qualifications of the applicant affect the admissions decision. Institutional capacity can be a limiting factor. For example, if there is studio space for only five sculptors, accepting more than five students would be unfair to both the students and the faculty. If the faculty members in a department decide to limit the number of advisees any faculty member may have, then the department should not accept more than that number of students in each advisor's specialty. If the program does not offer the specialty desired by the applicant, the student should not be admitted. The overriding criterion here is that the department should deliver what it promises to the student, including adequate resources, access to an appropriate advisor, and the opportunity to complete the requirements for the degree.

Financial support considerations should not sway the admission decision. A department should not limit admission to those students who can be supported by the institution or outside funding agencies. Within the resource capacity of the department (space, personnel, etc.), all students who meet admissions requirements should be offered admission. To deny individuals access to a graduate education because of a funding issue does not make academic sense. However, having to rely on one's own resources may extend the time to degree and in some instances may reduce the likelihood that a student will complete the degree.[9] It is important, therefore, that self-funded students have an understanding of the real costs of graduate education, including tuition, supplies, housing, health coverage, child care, etc.

Students who have outside financial backing should not be given preferential consideration in the admissions process. The department should be aware that preliminary screening by outside agencies, even when they provide financial backing, does not ensure that the student is qualified for academic study. This is especially true for international students.

At the graduate office level, departmental admissions recommendations are usually accepted except in special circumstances. The graduate school should make the decision on applicants who do not meet the minimal standards of admission yet are recommended for admission by the department. There will inevitably be requests for special consideration for certain students who, for example, claim difficulties in taking the TOEFL or fall short on one or more of the baseline standards. Review of these requests is generally carried out by the graduate dean or other designated administrator who can view the effects of this admission on the general admission policies of the institution. Further, particular attention should be paid to applications from under-represented populations. Rejections of qualified students in these categories should be questioned.

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[9]Bowen and Rudenstine, *In Pursuit of the PhD*, Princeton University Press, 1992, p. 191.

Although admission to graduate school is based mainly on academic preparation and potential, the university may wish to deny admission based on non-academic factors, such as criminal history or prior college disciplinary history. In such cases, clear guidelines should be stated in admissions documents, such as the catalog.

Admissions Processing

The interests of both the student and institution are best served when applications are processed and students are notified of the admission decision in a timely fashion. In centralized systems, this means that departmental information on potential students must be brought into the admissions process as soon as possible, and for decentralized systems that current information received by the graduate office or divisional graduate unit be disseminated to the departments shortly after it is received. Multi-copy application forms are used by some institutions, with one copy being sent to the graduate unit or to the department, depending upon which entity receives the initial application, in order to keep both units informed of the application.

To expedite the collection of application materials, some institutions have the student collect all the required credentials, including transcripts and letters of recommendation, and submit them with the application. This is known as student managed admissions. The institution saves time tracking the receipt of application materials, and the student knows that all required material has been sent. These advantages must be weighed against the possibility of credential fraud.

Rolling versus Fixed Date Admissions. Some institutions or departments practice a form of rolling admissions whereby applicants' dossiers are evaluated as soon as all credentials are received, or they are held and evaluated on a set basis (e.g., biweekly review) which may vary according to application workload (e.g., monthly during slow periods, but weekly during busy periods). The applicant is notified of the admission decision shortly after it is made. Other universities use a fixed date notification system in which all candidates for admission are notified of the admission decision at a predetermined date (typically, April 1 for fall matriculation). Rolling date admissions are generally preferred by discipline-based humanities and sciences departments, while some of the professional departments or schools prefer fixed date admissions. Rolling admissions works best in those graduate programs that do not have fixed class sizes. An advantage of rolling admissions is that applications are reviewed shortly after they come in and students receive an answer rather quickly. This minimizes the student's motivation to search elsewhere and helps the student set future plans as quickly as possible. From the administrative point of view, rolling admissions spreads the burden of processing admissions over a period of several months.

On the other hand, fixed date admissions enables all dossiers to be reviewed at the same time with the same standards being applied to all applicants. This procedure should be followed when class sizes are fixed, to ensure the best possible entering class. Since more time is usually required to evaluate an admissions file for an international applicant, earlier application deadlines are probably necessary for this group so that they can be evaluated with the domestic applications.

When a department uses rolling admissions, it may choose to wait until a sufficient number of applications come in before holding a committee meeting. However, the department should not delay unduly in processing the admission dossiers. Some institutions may set a time limit, usually two to four weeks, to ensure that departments respond expeditiously to applications. Every effort should be made to notify the graduate unit of the admission decision in a timely manner.

The membership of the Council of Graduate Schools has supported the *CGS Resolution*, a document focused on financial support of graduate students (see section on Financial Aid) which indirectly affects admission decision timing. In order for students to abide by the *Resolution's* guidelines, wherein they have until April 15 to accept offers of financial assistance, they need to be informed of the admission and financial aid decisions at all institutions to which they have applied before April 15.

Innovations in Admissions Processing. In today's recessionary times, many graduate admissions offices are reporting an overwhelming increase in graduate applications, coupled with staff reductions due to budgetary constraints. In some cases, these changes are so severely crippling the system that applications are not being processed during the critical admissions season. Other universities are reporting a four to six week backlog in the admissions area. To combat these difficulties, many institutions have begun to question their admissions procedures, and some innovative ideas in admissions processing are being introduced.

Several time-saving approaches are being experimented with, including accepting student computed grade point averages, unofficial transcripts, official or unofficial transcripts from only the last 60 credit hours of study, and/or student reported standardized test scores. These undocumented data are used only in the screening or evaluation stage of the application process; all applicants recommended for admission must provide official copies of all credentials prior to either acceptance or matriculation. Students are informed that a material misrepresentation of data might result in their acceptance being withdrawn. In most cases, departments are given the option of requiring official credentials for evaluation purposes or permitting applicant submitted data.

When students are asked to compute their own grade point averages, it is crucial that explicit instructions be given, including the method of calculating the average as well as

what courses to include. Where discrepancies between student computed grade point averages and actual GPA's are found, they usually are from arithmetic errors, failure to consider properly a mixture of quarter and semester hour credits, or "ignoring" certain courses with grades of 'D' or 'F.' For the most part, however, the institutions using student reported grade point averages have found the calculations to be accurate.

Some institutions have found that staggering application deadlines by department over a two or more month period has helped relieve the backlog in the admissions office by leveling the peak. Others compute grade point averages only when the department indicates they are needed. When the GPA is obviously very high or very low, precise computation is deemed unnecessary. Still others have partially decentralized the application processing function, giving departments the option of choosing among centralized processing of all applications, departmental processing of all applications, or departmental processing of domestic applications and centralized processing of international applications. The central office maintains close contacts with the departments, providing documentation and assistance when needed, especially in regards to international applicants.

Evaluating an Applicant with an Incomplete Dossier. Occasionally a candidate or a department may request that the student be considered for admission before all credentials are submitted. In general, it is advisable to require a complete file to admit a student, although in some cases it might be safe to reject a student based upon an incomplete dossier. Early notice of non-acceptance gives the student an opportunity to apply in a timely fashion to other schools or to look for other alternative career opportunities. This is especially true for international students for whom requiring a complete dossier can create a great hardship. Some institutions have adopted a preliminary admission procedure for the foreign applicant to screen out at any early stage candidates who are not qualified for admission to the program, usually because of low TOEFL scores or inadequate academic preparation. Especially for those students who must travel great distances to take the GRE or for whom test costs are beyond their means, to be told that a program is not appropriate or that the student's academic background is not sufficient for admission before he or she takes the exam is humanitarian. However, some universities have found that this preliminary application is not useful because of timing problems or added personnel costs.

Generally, no student should be admitted before all required credentials are submitted. However, unusual circumstances might lead a department to request an early admission decision even though some application material, such as a letter of recommendation or a transcript of a minor portion of the student's record, has not been received. An example of this situation might be when a student with exceptional talent in a subject area expresses a desire to work with a distinguished professor in that field, and the professor requests an early admission decision. In these special cases, a system should be

established to properly and evenhandedly evaluate the merits of a request for admission prior to all credentials being received. The graduate unit should develop a form (which might be called a "Form to Expedite Admission") which the graduate program director could fill out and submit to the graduate unit. The form would request a rationale for admitting the student without the required documentation. The graduate dean would then make the determination of whether early admission is warranted. [See Appendix C for a sample form.]

In cases where the department requires additional material beyond that of the graduate unit, the department may request to waive any of this documentation but should provide justification for the request. The graduate dean or division graduate administrator may then approve or deny the waiver request.

Monitoring Special Interest Applications. Many institutions have launched special initiatives to increase participation of under-represented groups in several academic areas.[10] When this is the case, it is important to set up a monitoring system for these applications to track the success of the effort. Students in these special categories need to be identified and the admission recommendation examined by someone in the graduate office. When a student who appears to meet graduate school and departmental standards is rejected, a discussion with the department may result in a decision to admit the student or it may verify that the non-acceptance was made for valid reasons, such as space limitations or incompatible research interests of the student and faculty.

The Appeal Process

When a student is denied admission, it is important that the specific reasons are stated in the student's file. A student who requests the information should also be informed of the reasons for the rejection. If the applicant appeals the decision, the administrator who had the final authority in making the rejection decision should ascertain whether any procedural policies were violated in the case. If so, the admission decision should be reviewed. Some institutions have a committee, such as an executive committee or a subcommittee of the graduate council, review the application.

EVALUATING ADMISSIONS POLICIES

The graduate admissions process is, at best, a method for deciding on the best mix of students commensurate with the philosophy and goals of the department. However, since all the skills necessary to succeed in graduate programs are not measurable, any admission

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[10]The CGS publication *Enhancing the Minority Presence in Graduate Education IV: Models and Resources for Minority Student Recruitment and Retention* gives examples of how some schools accomplish this goal.

criteria cannot be viewed as perfect. For this reason, it is imperative that every program evaluate the effects of its admission policies on an annual basis.

An important factor in evaluating the success of the admissions process is the determination of student success (or failure) as correlated with his or her admission credentials. Questions should be addressed such as "Do students who were admitted provisionally with academic deficiencies perform any differently in the program than those who were admitted with regular status? Are the credentials of those students who 'succeed' any different from those who do not complete the program due to academic difficulties? Why do students whom we predicted would succeed not succeed?"

To effectively evaluate the admissions policies, a centralized database that tracks the applicant pool is a necessity. Demographic information, including gender, age, citizenship, and ethnicity, as well as the undergraduate major, undergraduate institution, undergraduate grade point average, and standardized test scores (GRE, GMAT, MAT, TOEFL, etc.) should be recorded. The graduate program name, admission decision, category of admission, and degree sought should be entered for each applicant. Data should be maintained on the number of inquiries, applications, admissions, and enrollments for each department, either on a term or a yearly basis. Also, when possible, the reasons why an accepted applicant chooses not to attend should be included in the database.

Using these data, the characteristics of the applicant pool can be examined and changes over time detected. An analysis by department of what percent of applicants are being admitted will give an indication of which departments are more selective than others. Comparisons with national percentage acceptance rates by department may lead to revised admission policies in those programs where large discrepancies exist. A student profile for each program in which the population characteristics of sex, age, ethnicity, and citizenship are tabulated will show whether diversity goals are being met and where further efforts are needed. An analysis of the matriculation rates by department, including percentages and demographics of those who actually enroll, may indicate further where problems exist.

The data can be used also to predict enrollments, which is especially useful if the institution must react to sudden demands to reduce enrollments or budgets. Shifts in student interests may prompt a shift in institutional resources.

A knowledge of which undergraduate institutions are feeder schools is helpful in targeting recruitment efforts. A comparison of where underrepresented student groups who currently attend the graduate school received their bachelor's degrees with those institutions that award degrees to large numbers of these students may lead to a reassessment of recruiting practices at those institutions.

POST-ADMISSION DECISION ACTIVITY

It is critical that departments and graduate units follow u
students to increase the likelihood that they will enroll. Gradu
newsletters, orientation materials, and other campus informa
housing availability, fitness facilities, or health insurance optic
intervals to keep the institutional image in mind. Some institut
students or faculty to contact outstanding prospects to discuss
Accepted applicants should be encouraged to visit the campus
students and to see the facilities.

p on decisions to admit
ate school or department
ation on such issues as
ons might be sent out at
tions ask current graduate
the program with them.
to talk with faculty and

Whenever possible, it is also informative to determine why
declined. Some reasons for not matriculating such as obtainir
health problems may be unrelated to specific university or progra
academic, financial or environmental reasons seem to recur, the
may wish to make changes in policies or practices or reallocate
problems, if it is in their domain to do so. Academic reasons n
of inadequate laboratory or library facilities or the absence
Financial reasons might be that not enough aid was offered
competitive with other institutions' offers, or financial aid
Environmental reasons might relate to housing availability, safet
in the community, or support services such as child care.

y offers of admission are
ng a job or experiencing
am factors. But if specific
institution or department
resources to alleviate the
might include perceptions
of a desired specialty.
d, financial aid was not
l was offered too late.
ty factors on campus and

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Application Fee

Most institutions charge all applicants a nominal amount of
by program. This application fee is non-refundable. The amou
determined by the reason for which it is charged. Many univer
offset the cost of processing the application. Some use the appl
frivolous applications. Because of the additional processing requi
applications, many institutions charge a higher fee for this gr
consider the application fee of schools comparable to your own
the fee.

money which may vary
unt of the fee should be
rsities assess this fee to
lication fee to discourage
irements for international
roup. It is practical to
institution when setting

Institutions may consider waiving the application fee for ap
need. For students who are seniors receiving financial aid throu
college or who are applying through a minority program such
application fee waiver program similar to the one established by
GRE tests might be used, whereby a financial aid coordin
undergraduate institution certifies that the student has financial ne

pplicants with financial
gh a U.S. undergraduate
as PROJECT 1000, an
the GRE Board for the
ator at the applicant's
ed. This application fee

waiver service usually is not available for international applicants or for students who are no longer in college. For this growing population of applicants, some other mechanism for showing financial need is required. This might be achieved by requesting the applicant to write a letter explaining the financial circumstances which necessitates the fee waiver request. It is then up to the individual institution whether to waive the fee. The graduate admissions administrator should be aware of those countries in which it is difficult for the applicant to remove money, and in these cases, should either waive the fee, or require its payment after the student arrives in the country.

Financial Aid Considerations

Institutional financial aid normally occurs in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, administrative assistantships, or tuition scholarships. Research assistantships are generally dependent upon a particular match between student and faculty member, and if awarded to a new student, are often awarded to the student at the same time that his or her acceptance is offered. All other financial aid, particularly merit fellowships and tuition scholarships, should be awarded following a review of all applicants. This enables the institution to rank these applicants and award aid to the most qualified. The determination of financial aid awards should be made by a faculty committee with participation of administrators who can oversee the effective distribution of resources. The student should be informed of the award by the graduate office (or in institutions with no graduate school, by the same individual who offers admission to the student). This ensures that offers of financial assistance are not made prematurely (before a student has been admitted) and serves as a check on allocation of financial aid funding.

In addition, the Council of Graduate Schools Resolution [see Appendix A] should be sent to the student when the award of an assistantship, traineeship, fellowship, or scholarship is made. Students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial support prior to April 15, and if they do so, they may withdraw this acceptance in writing at any time through April 15. An acceptance made on or after April 15 commits the student not to accept any other offer without first getting a release in writing from the institution to whom the commitment is made. Similarly, an offer made by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of a written release from any previously accepted offer. When the offer of financial aid is sent from the graduate office, it is less likely that a department or student will violate the spirit of this agreement.

For further information on financial aid, consult *Graduate Student Financial Support: A Handbook for Graduate Deans, Faculty, and Administrators*, Council of Graduate Schools, Washington, D.C.

CONCLUSION

Graduate admissions is related to almost every major interest of a university from recruitment to retention to academic quality to diversity. The admissions process is often the student's first real contact with the university, and the quality of the experience may well determine whether the student will attend and later complete the graduate program.

This booklet was written for the purpose of describing good practice in the graduate admissions function. While each institution may implement graduate admissions activities in its own fashion, in all cases the academic departments play a critical role in determining who will ultimately make up the community of scholars at the university. It is vital that the faculty involved in the admissions decisions be cognizant of the issues relating to graduate admissions, including federal and state laws and regulations, university-wide policies and procedures, and departmental guidelines.

The role of the graduate office (or, in its absence, the graduate administrative unit) in this process should be one of assistance in maintaining quality standards as established by a council of the faculty, and providing resources as well as policy guidance in matters of admission. Friendly relationships with departments must be maintained with timely interchange of information both to and from the graduate unit and the department.

A range of options for the various graduate admissions functions have been presented here, with some discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each. Each institution must determine how best to administer its admissions processes so that quality and equity are achieved.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants

COUNCIL OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS

Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants

Acceptance of an offer of financial support (such as a graduate scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, or assistantship) for the next academic year by a prospective or enrolled graduate student completes an agreement that both student and graduate school expect to honor. In that context, the conditions affecting such offers and their acceptance must be defined carefully and understood by all parties.

Students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial support prior to April 15; earlier deadlines for acceptance of such offers violate the intent of this Resolution. In those instances in which a student accepts an offer before April 15, and subsequently desires to withdraw that acceptance, the student may submit in writing a resignation of the appointment at any time through April 15. However, an acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student not to accept another offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution to which a commitment has been made. Similarly, an offer by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of the written release from any previously accepted offer. It is futher agreed by the institutions and organization subscribing to the above Resolution that a copy of this Resolution should accompany every scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, and assistanship offer.

The following list includes CGS members and those institutions which indicated their support of the above Resolution as of July 1, 1992.

Abilene Christian University
Adelphi University
Alfred University
Alabama A&M University
American University
Andrews University
Appalachian University
Angelo State University
Arizona State University
Arkansas State University
Auburn University
Austin Peay State University
Ball State University
Baylor College of Medicine
Baylor University
Boston College
Boston University
Bowling Green State University
Bradley University
Brandeis University
Bridgewater State College
Brigham Young University
Brown University
Bryn Mawr College
California Institute of Technology
California University of Pennsylvania
California State College, Stanislaus
California State University, Bakersfield
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
California State University, Fresno
California State University, Fullerton
California State University, Hayward
California State University, Long Beach
California State University, Los Angeles
California State University, Northridge
California State University, Sacramento
Case Western Reserve University
Catholic University of America
Central Michigan University
Central Missouri State University
Central State University
Central Washington University
Chicago State Univer...
City College of the City University of New York
City University of New York
Claremont Graduate School
Clark Atlanta University
Clark University
Clemson University
Cleveland State University
College of Saint Rose
College of William & Mary
Colorado School of Mines
Columbia University
Coppin State College
Cornell University
Creighton University
Dartmouth College
DePaul University
Drake University
Drew University
Drexel University
Duke University
Duquesne University
East Carolina University
East Central Oklahoma State
East Tennessee State University
East Texas State University
Eastern Illinois University
Eastern Kentucky University
Eastern Michigan University
Eastern Washington University
Emerson College
Emory University
Emporia State University
Fairleigh Dickinson University
Fielding Institute
Fisk University
Fitchburg State College
Florida Atlantic University
Florida International University
Florida State University
Fordham University
Fort Hays State University
Gallaudet College
Gannon University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Georgia Southern College
Glassboro State College
Governors State University
Hahnemann University
Hampton University
Hardin-Simmons University
Harvard University
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
Hofstra University
Howard University
Idaho State University
Illinois Institute of Technology
Illinois State University
Indiana State University
Indiana University
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Iona College
Iowa State University
Jackson State University
James Madison University
John Carroll University
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Johns Hopkins University
Kansas State University
Kent State University
Lamar University
Lehigh University
Loma Linda University
Louisana State University and A&M College
Louisana State University Medical Center
Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University of Chicago
Mankato State University
Marquette University
Marshall University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
McNeese State University
Medical College of Georgia
Medical College of Pennsylvania
Medical College of Wisconsin
Medical University of South Carolina
Memphis State University
Miami University
Michigan State University
Michigan Technological University
Middle Tennessee State University
Midwestern State University
Mississippi College
Mississippi State University
Montana State University
Montclair State College
Morehead State University
Murray State University
National University
Naval Postgraduate School
New Jersey Institute of Technology
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
New Mexico State University
New School of Social Research
New York Medical College
New York University
Niagara University
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
North Carolina State University at Raleigh
North Dakota State University
North Texas State University
Northeast Missouri State University
Northeastern University
Northeastern Illinois University
Northern Arizona University
Northern Illinois University
Northern Michigan University
Northwestern University
Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Appendix A continued

Nova University
Oakland University
Ohio State University
Ohio University
Oklahoma State University
Old Dominion University
Oregon State University
Pennsylvania State University
Pepperdine University
Pittsburg State University
Polytechnic University
Princeton University
Purdue University
Queens College of the City University of New York
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rhode Island College
Rice University
Rockfeller University
Roosevelt University
Russell Sage College
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Sacred Heart University
St. Bonaventure University
St. John's University
Saint Louis University
St. Mary's University
Sam Houston State University
San Diego State University
San Francisco State University
San Jose State University
Sangamon State University
Santa Clara University
Seattle University
Shippensburg University
Sonoma State University
South Carolina State University
South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
South Dakota State University
Southeastern Louisiana University
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville
Southern Methodist University
Southern University
Southwest Missouri State University
Southwest Texas State University
Stanford University
State University of New York, Albany
State University of New York, Binghamton
State University of New York, Buffalo
State University of New York, Stony Brook
State University of New York—Downstate Medical Center
State University of New York—Upstate Medical Center
Stephen F. Austin State University
Stetson University
Stevens Institute of Technology
Syracuse University
Temple University
Tennessee State University
Tennessee Technological University
Texas A&M University
Texas Christian University
Texas Southern University
Texas Tech University
Texas Woman's University
Towson State University
Trenton State University
Trinity University
Tufts University
Tulane University
United State International University
University of Akron
University of Alabama
University of Alabama at Birmingham
University of Alabama in Huntsville
University of Alaska
University of Arizona
University of Arkansas
University of Baltimore
University of Bridgeport
University of California at Berkeley
University of California-Davis
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Riverside
University of California, San Diego
University of California, San Francisco
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of California Santa Cruz
University of Central Florida
University of Chicago
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado at Boulder
University of Colorado at Denver
University of Connecticut
University of Dayton
University of Delaware
University of Denver
University of Detroit
University of the District of Columbia
University of Evansville
University of Florida
University of Georgia
University of Hartford
University of Hawaii
University of Health Sciences/The Chicago Medical School
University of Houston
University of Idaho
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Iowa
University of Kansas
University of Louisville
University of Lowell
University of Maine
University of Maryland
University of Massachusetts at Amherst
University of Massachusetts-Boston
University of Maimi
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Mississippi
University of Missouri, Columbia
University of Missouri, Rolla
University of Missouri, St. Louis
University of Montana
University of Nebraska, Lincoln
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
University of Nevada, Reno
University of New Hampshire
University of New Haven
University of New Mexico
University of New Orleans
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina, Charlotte
University of North Carolina, Greensboro
University of North Carolina, Wilmington
University of North Dakota
University of North Texas
University of Northern Colorado
University of Northern Iowa
University of Notre Dame
University of Oklahoma
University of Oregon
University of the Pacific
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rhode Island
University of Rochester
University of San Francisco
University of Santa Clara
University of Scranton
University of South Carolina
University of South Dakota
University of South Florida
University of Southern California
University of Southern Maine
University of Southern Mississippi
University of Southwestern Louisiana
University of Tennessee, Memphis Center for the Health Sciences
University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
University of Tennessee, Martin
University of Texas at Arlington
University of Texas at Austin
University of Texas at Dallas
University of Texas at San Antonio
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
University of University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
University of Toledo
University of Tulsa
University of Utah
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
University of Wisconsin-Madison
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
University of Wisconsin-Stout
University of Wyoming
Utah State University
Vanderbilt University
Villanova University
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University
Wake Forest University
Washington State University
Washington University
Wayne State College
Wayne State University
Wesleyan University
West Chester University
West Texas State University
West Virginia University
Western Carolina University
Western Kentucky University
Western Michigan University
Western Washington University
Westfield State College
Wichita State University
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Worcester State College
Wright State University
Xavier University
Yale University
Youngstown State University

Council of Graduate Schools
One Dupont Circle, N.W., Suite 430
Washington, D.C. 20036-1173

Appendix B

Examples from Graduate Program Application Materials

Throughout the text, recommendations are made concerning the content of different application materials. The following examples represent some formats, phrasings or forms taken from existing application materials of various graduate institutions across the country. They are meant to serve as a starting point for designing application materials consistent with recommendations in this document.

I. General Information: Review and Notification

You will be notified that we have received your application if you complete the postcards included in this application. Make sure that your name as given on your application is typed or printed legibly on all official papers submitted in support of your application and on all correspondence with the Graduate Admissions/Fellowship Office and with your major department.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement within four to six weeks, you should inquire about the status of your application. Please call the office to which you mailed your application--either the department or the Office of Graduate Admissions (see "Where to Mail Your Application").

Offer of Admission. *Only written notice from the Dean of the Graduate Division constitutes approval of admission, not correspondence with a department or with an individual faculty member.*

Applicants offered admission with a fellowship will be notified by April 1. Students recommended for admission only are usually advised by the end of April for fall semester.

Source: University of California at Berkeley Application

II. Application Forms

A. Biographical Information

Full Name _____ (Last/Family Name) _____ (First) _____ (Middle)

Please list former names which may appear on transcripts being submitted.

Permanent Address Valid until _____

_____ (Street, Apt. #)

_____ (City, State/Country, Mail/Zip Code)

Telephone _____ (Day: Area Code/Number) _____ (Night: Area Code/Number)

5. Mailing Address, if different Valid until _____

_____ (Street, Apt. #)

_____ (City, State/Country, Mail/Zip Code)

Telephone _____ (Day: Area Code/Number) _____ (Night: Area Code/Number)

Valid until _____

Electronic Mail Address _____

Source: University of Michigan, Rackham School of Graduate Studies

B. Visa Information

NON-U.S. CITIZENS: What visa type do you plan to hold when the quarter begins? ***Please check only one.***

1 ☐ (F1) STUDENT* 3 ☐ (J1) EXCHANGE* 5 ☐ (IM) IMMIGRANT

2 ☐ (RF) REFUGEE 4 ☐ (PR) PERMANENT U.S. RESIDENT 6 ☐ (OT) OTHER (Please Specify) _____

**The appropriate form will be sent to obtain the visa only if you check the box.*

Source: University of California at Los Angeles

If you are not a U.S. citizen, please check and complete one of the following:

☐ Non-immigrant. Anticipated visa type (eg., F-1, J-1, etc.): _____

☐ Permanent Resident
☐ Political Asylum
☐ Refugee
☐ Parolee

Indicate alien registration number: A__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
and date status received: mo. _____ day _____ yr. _____

Source: The Ohio State University

C. Ethnic Survey

1. [ ] American Indian or Alaskan Native. - Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
2. [ ] Asian or Pacific Islander. - Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.
3. [ ] Black, not of Hispanic Origin. - Persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
4. [ ] Hispanic. - Persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish Culture or origin, regardless of race.
5. [ ] White, not of Hispanic Origin. - Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

Source: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Civil Rights Code (optional). Used to assess the progress being made in Affirmative Action at the University of Michigan. (Check one)

_____ 1 Black/African American

_____ 2 Asian American (Please specify) _____

_____ 3 American Indian (Tribal Affiliation, please specify) _____

_____ 4 Puerto Rican or Mexican American, Other Hispanic (Please specify) _____

_____ 5 White/Non-Hispanic

_____ 6 I do not wish to designate a code.

Source: University of Michigan, Rackham School of Graduate Studies

D. Prior Criminal or College Disciplinary History

Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony? __ No __ Yes (Attach a separate sheet describing the nature of the criminal activity, when it occurred, and your rehabilitation record.)

Source: St. Bonaventure University

Are you presently under suspension or dismissal for academic or disciplinary reasons from any college, university, or other formal post-secondary education program? __ No __ Yes — If yes, attach a statement of explanation.

Source: The Ohio State University

III. Transcript Evaluation: Student Computed GPA

Worksheet for Computing Grade-Point Average

For Courses Taken in the Second Half of a Four-Year Undergraduate Program

Not all departments require applicants to complete this page. Please contact your department. Applicants to the departments of English Language and Literature, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, as well as most of the other engineering departments, are required to complete this section. If you are uncertain about your department's requirement, complete this section. It is to your advantage to complete this page if you have a very good academic record and a delay in sending your transcripts is possible.

Grade-Point Average Computations: On this page list all undergraduate courses beginning with the third, or junior year, of a four-year program. Include work completed toward a second bachelor's degree or a professional degree if it was taken at the undergraduate degree level. Indicate whether a course was taken under a semester, quarter, or course unit system. Enter the credit hours and grade and calculate the honor-point equivalent (column F × G = H).

Your grade-point average is the total number of honor points divided by the total number of credit hours (Total of column H ÷ Total of column F).

Converting to a 4.0 Scale: If you attended an American institution where grades are other than A, B, C, D, or E you should convert the grades to this system on a 4.0 scale. Equivalencies can be obtained from the registrar of the previous institution.

Pass/Fail Grades: If you have indicated P/F grades in **relevant courses,** you must submit a written evaluation from the instructor(s) of the course(s).

Type of credit: S = semester hour Q = quarter hour C = course unit

Honor Points = credit hours times grade, e.g., 3 hrs. × 3.0 (B) = 9 Honor Points

A Institution	B Year Taken	C Dept and Course Number	D Course Title (indicate all laboratory courses)	E Type of Credit	F Credit Hours	G A = 4.0 B = 3.0 C = 2.0	H Honor Points Hours × Grade
			Major Field Courses				
			Related Courses				
			Other Courses				
			Courses in Progress				
					Grade Average (Total Honor Points ÷ Total Credit Hours)		

Please be sure to transfer GPA to item 31 on page 3 of this application.

Source: University of Michigan, Rackham School of Graduate Studies

Please provide your Undergraduate Grade-Point Average noted on the transcript of the institution from which you received your undergraduate degree. If you attended more than one institution for your undergraduate degree, please compute one GPA according to the steps below. If your institution did not compute a GPA, but did give grades, please compute your GPA following these steps:

1) refer to the table in the next column and find the grade point value of a grade; then, multiply that figure by the number of credits for the course (e.g., a three-credit B+: 3.3 grade points x 3 credits = 9.9 grade points);

2) do this for **every** course and add the total points;

3) divide this total by the total number of earned course credits (e.g., 215 points ÷ 60 credits = 3.58 GPA).

This final figure is the GPA that you record on your application.

Source: University of Wisconsin at Madison

Grade	Grade Point Value
A+	4
A	4
A-	3.7
AB	3.5
B+	3.3
B	3
B-	2.7
BC	2.5
C+	2.3
C	2
C-	1.7
CD	1.5
D+	1.3
D	1
D-	0.7
DF	0.5
F	0

N.B. Neither of these examples explain how to compute the GPA when there is a mixture of types of credits (i.e., semester, quarter, or unit).

IV. Letters of Reference

RECOMMENDATION FOR ADMISSION
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Recommendations should be mailed directly to the Graduate Chair of the Department to which the Applicant has applied.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT

I. INSTRUCTIONS TO THE APPLICANT: You **must** provide **all** information requested in this top Section. Print your name and Social Security number as they appear on your application to insure that this recommendation will be matched to your application file. Print the name of the department to which you are applying and its application deadline date. Also check the correct campus (see item 15 on the application). Print the name and address of your Recommender and provide the recommender with an addressed envelope (see the first column on page 4 for address instructions).

Name of Applicant _____ Name of Recommender _____

Social Security No. _____ Title _____

Department _____ Address _____

Application Deadline Date _____ Department _____

☐ Ann Arbor, MI 48109 ☐ Dearborn, MI 48128-1491 Institution _____

Under the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, you (if admitted and enrolled) will have access to the information provided unless you have waived such access. Please sign and date below to inform us of your decision.

I hereby waive my right of access to the information recorded below. **or** I do not waive my right of access to the information recorded below.

_____ _____

Signature of applicant Date Signature of applicant Date

II. RECOMMENDER: Under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, this applicant (if admitted and enrolled) will have access to the information provided unless he/she has waived such access.

After responding to the items below, please comment specifically on the applicant's strengths and limitations for graduate study. Descriptions of significant actions, accomplishments, and personal qualities related to scholarly achievement are particularly helpful. Several paragraphs will be more useful to the admission committee than one or two sentences. You may use the other side of this form or attach a letter to this form if you desire. If you do not wish to use this form, please include the full name of the student as it appears above to ensure that your recommendation will be added to the correct applicant file.

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant? _____

2. Please rate the applicant in comparison with others whom you have known at similar stages in their careers.

	Exceptional Upper 5%	Outstanding Next 15%	Very Good Next 15%	Good Next 15%	Next 50%	No Basis for Judgment
Knowledge in chosen field						
Motivation and perseverance toward goals						
Ability to work independently						
Ability to express thoughts in speech and writing						
Ability potential for college teaching						
Ability to plan and conduct research						

3. Please indicate the strength of your overall endorsement by placing an "X" along the scale.

Highly recommended | Recommended | Recommended with some reservations | Not Recommended

Name (printed) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Letter of Recommendation for Graduate Admission and Awards

Applicant's name _____

Applicant's address _____

* Proposed department of study _____

Person writing letter _____
(Please type or print the information above)

( ) I waive the right provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment) to view this letter of recommendation in my file at Iowa State University.

( ) I do *not* wish to waive this right. Rather, I wish to retain the right to view this letter in my file at Iowa State University.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

(The applicant should complete the items above and give this form to an individual well acquainted with his/her education and abilities.)

To writers of letters of recommendation:

Please comment in detail regarding the applicant's potential for graduate study and the basis for your judgment. We are particularly interested in your assessment of this student's ability and motivation to carry on **advanced study and research**, evidence of creative talent, ability to **speak and write English** clearly, and promise for a successful **career**. We are also interested in his/her potential as a possible **teaching** or **research assistant**. Use the reverse side if necessary. (Because Iowa State University is in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 we discourage you from referring directly or indirectly to an applicant's handicap.)

Out of approximately _____ persons I have taught advised at this educational level during the past _____ years, I would rank this applicant in the upper _____ percent on the basis of potential to achieve a graduate degree.

Signature _____ Date _____

Title/Position _____

Institution/Organization and Address _____

Note: Mail this form directly to department specified on line 3 above, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011-2010. (Please do not send this form to the Admissions Office.)

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Ames, Iowa 50011-2010
LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

8/91

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78712

• Application for Financial Award Request for Reference (Graduate Fellowships and Assistantships)

Under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, this applicant (if admitted and enrolled) will have access to the information provided below unless he/she has waived such access.

(Applicant complete top section)

Social Security Number (Required) ☐☐☐–☐☐–☐☐☐☐

1. Name of Applicant _____

2. Graduate program to which application is made _____

3. (Optional) I hereby waive my right of access to the material recorded below.

_____ _____
Signature of Applicant Date

4. Mail this form to: The University of Texas at Austin
Graduate Adviser, Department of _____
Austin, Texas 78712

To the Respondent: May we have your judgment of this candidate's qualifications and promise, of the candidate's intellectual ability, motivation and capacity for research or for acquiring professional skill, promise for a career in productive scholarship and effective teaching, the quality of previous work, and of his or her character and personality. We would be helped, too, by your checking, for comparative assessment, the boxes below.

Please continue on the other side of this sheet.

I would compare the applicant with other students of the same level as follows.

	EXCEPTIONAL	ABOVE AVERAGE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	NO INFORMATION
Intellectual Ability					
Writing Ability					
Speaking Ability					
Academic Preparation					
Motivation					
Maturity					
Teaching Ability					

I have known this applicant for approximately _____ years.
During this time the applicant was an: Undergraduate student ☐ Graduate student ☐ Assistant of mine ☐ Advisee of mine ☐
Departmental assistant ☐ Other (please specify) ☐ _____

In summary, I would give a: Very strong ☐ Strong ☐ Average ☐ Below average ☐ recommendation.
Recommendation with reservation (please specify) ☐ _____

Respondent's signature _____ Title _____ Date _____

Place of Employment _____

Name printed or typed _____ Address _____

Please mail directly to **Graduate Adviser of the Department** (given above) in which the applicant may do graduate work. To receive consideration, all of the applicant's references should be received by Feb. 1.

57

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Graduate School Personal Reference Form

To the Applicant:

This form should be given to professors who are able to comment on your qualifications for graduate study. You should not request a recommendation from a non-academic person unless you have been away from academic institutions for some time. If in doubt, check with the Graduate Studies Committee Chairperson of your prospective program.

Please complete items A, B, C, D, and E below. Deliver this form directly to a person who is acquainted with your academic program. You should supply this person with a stamped, addressed envelope for his or her use. The address on this envelope should be that of the Graduate Studies Committee Chairperson or Chairperson of the graduate program to which you are applying at Ohio State (see the *Graduate School Bulletin*).

A. _____ Degree Sought _____
Student's Last Name First Middle

B. Field of Study/Graduate program: _____ (Please refer to the *Graduate School Bulletin*)

C. Address of Graduate Studies or Admission Committee Chairperson:

_____

_____

The Ohio State University

Columbus, Ohio 43210

D. Indicate the date of any contact you may have had with an Ohio State faculty member regarding graduate study and the name of the faculty member with whom you made contact: _____

E. Please list the courses you took under the direction of the person completing this form.

Course Number	Course Title	When Taken	Grade

Applicant's Waiver of Right to Access

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, (P.L. 93-380), allows a candidate for admission, employment, or receipt of honors to waive his or her right of access to confidential letters or statements written in his or her behalf if the recommendation is used solely for the purposes of admission, employment or the receipt of honors and if the candidate, upon request, is notified of the names of all persons making such recommendations on his or her behalf. The University does not require that you make such a waiver as a condition for admission or award of fellowship. However, under the legislation you have the option of signing such a waiver as follows:

I hereby waive my right of access to this recommendation and any appropriate attachments which have been written by

_____ (name of recommender)

in behalf of my application for admission to the Graduate School, The Ohio State University, and for award of a fellowship, if applicable. This waiver is effective insofar as the recommendation is used solely for the purpose of admission or award of fellowship, if applicable.

Name _____ Date _____ Signature _____
Please Print

To the Person Completing This Form:

The student named above has applied for admission to the Graduate School of The Ohio State University. Please complete this personal reference form and return it as soon as possible. If you have not had the applicant as a student, you may prefer to write a separate letter and attach it to this form. If you do not know this student well, please feel free to say so; such frankness will not prejudice the candidate's chance of admission.

1. I have verified that Section E above is correct. ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. ☐ I do not know the student well enough to give him or her a recommendation. (If you check this box, you do not need to complete the rest of this form.)

The Ohio State University
Form #7650—Rev. 7-91

Over

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

3. I would be pleased to have the applicant working under my direction as a: ☐ Research Assistant ☐ Teaching Assistant

☐ Fellow ☐ Master's Candidate ☐ Doctoral Dissertation Candidate ☐ Other _____

4. Recommendations for Admission	Doctoral Program	Master's Program	Other Program (Please Specify)
I strongly recommend for	☐	☐	_____
I recommend for	☐	☐	_____
I recommend with reservations for	☐	☐	_____
I do not recommend for	☐	☐	_____

5. SUMMARY EVALUATION: In comparison with a representative group of students in the same field who have had approximately the same amount of experience and training, how do you rate the applicant in general research and scholarly ability:

☐ Outstanding	(Comparable to the best student in the current class, highest 5%)
☐ Very Good	(Next highest 10%)
☐ Good	(Ability easily identifiable, in upper 25%)
☐ Average	(Upper 50%)
☐ Below Average	

Note: Please check the educational level of the representative group with whom the applicant is compared:
- ☐ College Juniors
- ☐ College Seniors
- ☐ First-Year Graduate Students
- ☐ Advanced Graduate Students

6. Some gifted individuals make mediocre scholastic records. Is the applicant's scholastic record, as you know it, an accurate index of his or her scholastic ability? Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

If your answer is "No," please explain briefly, possibly giving consideration to the applicant's performance in independent study or in research participation programs.

7. What is your opinion of the applicant's potential as a graduate student? Give views on such matters as his/her accomplishments, intellectual independence, research interests, capacity for analytical thinking, ability to work with others, ability to organize and express ideas clearly (orally or in writing), drive, and motivation.

Signature of recommender _____ Date _____

Name _____ Title _____
Print or Type

Institution _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

UNIVERSITY of GUELPH

Assessment of an Applicant for Graduate Studies

THE APPLICANT SHOULD COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING AND FORWARD TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS WELL ACQUAINTED WITH THE APPLICANT'S EDUCATION AND ABILITIES.

NAME OF APPLICANT

SURNAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____ GIVEN NAMES _____

DEGREE APPLIED FOR:

☐ M.A. ☐ M.Sc. ☐ M.Agr. ☐ M.L.A.

☐ Ph.D. ☐ D.V.Sc. ☐ GRADUATE DIPLOMA ☐ NON-DEGREE

DEPARTMENT

SEMESTER IN WHICH YOU WISH TO START YOUR PROGRAM

☐ FALL 19____ ☐ WINTER 19____ ☐ SPRING 19____

THIS AREA TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REFEREE

a) CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES BELOW

OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL YEARS, IN A GROUP OF 100 STUDENTS, THE APPLICANT WOULD RANK:	OUTSTANDING		ABOVE AVERAGE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	UNABLE TO JUDGE
	UPPER 2%	UPPER 10%	UPPER 30%	UPPER 50%	LOWER 50%	
BACKGROUND PREPARATION						
ORIGINALITY						
POTENTIAL RESEARCH ABILITY						
INDUSTRY / PERSEVERANCE						
JUDGEMENT / CRITICAL SENSE						
INTELLECTUAL ABILITY						
VERBAL & WRITTEN COMMUNICATION						

b) WHAT IS YOUR OVERALL ESTIMATION OF THE APPLICANT'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE RELATIVE TO OTHERS HAVING SIMILAR TRAINING?

UPPER 2% ☐ UPPER 10% ☐ UPPER 20% ☐ UPPER 30% ☐ UPPER 50% ☐ LOWER 50% ☐

c) OVER WHAT TIME PERIOD HAVE YOU KNOWN THE APPLICANT? _____

d) WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE APPLICANT? (E.G. EMPLOYER, PROFESSOR)

_____

_____

e) WOULD THIS APPLICANT BE ADMITTED TO YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM?

_____

f) COMMENTS - PLEASE SEE BACK OF THIS ASSESSMENT FOR COMMENTS SECTION AND MAILING ADDRESS.

V. Statement of Purpose

UCLA **1993-94 Part C**

APPLICANT: Please provide NAME (Last, First, Middle)

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE / Academic Awards, Work Experience, Publications/Organizations

Please mail to: UCLA
Department/School of _____ (Proposed Major)
Los Angeles, CA 90024

NAME, as given on the application _____ _____
Last First Middle U.S. Social Security Number

QUARTER for which application is filed at UCLA: ☐ Fall 19____ ☐ Winter 19____ ☐ Spring 19____
year year year

PROPOSED MAJOR at UCLA _____ IMMEDIATE DEGREE OBJECTIVE _____

AWARDS/DISTINCTIONS: List academic awards, prizes, honors, fellowships or other distinctions you have received.

PERTINENT WORK EXPERIENCE: List employment occupation or activities pertinent to your graduate goals during or since your collegiate studies.

PUBLICATIONS/ORGANIZATIONS: If pertinent to your proposed field of study, please list your publications and any scholarly or professional organizations in which you hold membership.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: On the back of this form, please state your purpose in applying for graduate study, your particular area of specialization within the major, your plans for future occupation or profession, and any additional information that may aid the selection committee in evaluating your preparation and your aptitude for graduate study at UCLA. Attach an additional sheet if necessary.

If you have submitted a statement of purpose as part of a separate application to a professional school you need not write an additional statement here.

Source: UCLA

The Graduate School
The University of Texas at Austin

PERSONAL STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL AWARD APPLICANT

Name of Applicant: _____ Social Security Number (Required) ☐☐☐-☐☐-☐☐☐☐

Department: _____

In reviewing applications for financial awards, the Faculty Review Committee considers evidence of creativity, initiative, motivation, and other characteristics indicative of the applicant's potential as a scholar and contributor to society. Such evidence may or may not be accurately or adequately represented by test scores, grades, or other information tabulated in your application. Please feel free to communicate to the committee any additional comments on your activities, accomplishments, goals, and research interests that give evidence of these characteristics and that might be helpful in evaluating your application. Use an additional sheet if necessary.

Mail this form directly to: The University of Texas at Austin
Graduate Adviser
(Department or Program Name)
Austin, Texas 78712

Appendix C

Form to Expedite Admission

Forward this form to the Admissions Office

Expedite Admission Form for Outstanding Graduate Applicants

SSN _____ - _____ - _____ Quarter & Year _____

Applicant's Name _____
Last First Middle

Graduate Program Name _____ Program Number _____

NOTE:
1. Before an applicant can be admitted, a current application must be on file in the Admissions Office or submitted with this form.
2. Before an international applicant can be admitted, the $25 application fee must be paid. (Payment may be submitted with this form.)
3. Applicants admitted via this form will be considered provisional and will still be responsible for submitting all required documents prior to the third week of the first quarter of enrollment. Failure to do so will prevent future quarter registration.
4. If financial support is being offered to an international applicant, decision processing will go faster when an appointment information form is completed and attached.

This is to certify that the Graduate Studies Committee has examined the credentials presented by the above-named applicant and wishes to expedite his/her admission. Based on all available evidence, the Committee is of the opinion that this applicant meets all minimum graduate admission criteria, has or will receive a degree from an accredited institution, and has an outstanding academic background. (Applicants with a cumulative GPA of below 2.70 do not qualify.)

ADMIT to the program with graduate standing as a: (Mark the appropriate box.)

☐ Regular student in _____ degree program.
(Specify Master's or Ph.D.)

☐ Conditional student in _____ degree program.
(Specify Master's or Ph.D.)

Specify conditions and time period for their fulfillment _____

_____

_____

☐ Special student

☐ If box is checked the student's master's degree will count as 45 hours of credit

IF THIS IS AN INTERNATIONAL APPLICANT, WILL AN ASSOCIATESHIP BE AWARDED?

☐ No ☐ Undecided ☐ Yes (Attach appointment information form or copy of award letter.)

Signature _____ Date _____
Graduate Studies Committee Chairperson

Source: Ohio State University

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